TIMBER FALLS

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FADE IN:

1 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 1

CLOSE ON - A YOUNG WOMAN'S EYE. Bloodshot blue. Her eyelashes tremble. A tear rolls out. She blinks.

CLOSE ON - A filthy, coarse rope secures a dirty rag inside her mouth.

CLOSE ON - The same type rope binds her ankles together.

CLOSE ON HER HANDS - A mixture of blood, dirt. IRON SPIKES ARE NAILED THROUGH HER PALMS.

FROM ABOVE - The Young Woman, 20s, wearing a handmade dress with a small crest embroidered over the heart, lies nailed to a wooden table.

AN OVERHEAD LIGHT BULB DIMS, CRACKLES. OFF SCREEN: A BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM cries out.

The Young Woman's breathing intensifies. She watches the light bulb, listens to the screams.

The light bulb returns to normal. The screams stop. Peace for a moment. But she knows that won't last.

2 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2** 2

A YOUNG MAN, 20s, hangs by his wrists from iron shackles secured to the ceiling. He's bloodied, bruised... a mess.

CLOSE ON - The end of a pair of jumper cables. They TOUCH, sending SPARKS into the air. Brought together by...

A CONCEALED FIGURE. All that's visible are his hands. His left hand is SEVERELY BURNED, SCARRED, while his right appears normal. He touches the jumper cables together again... SPARKS FLY.

YOUNG MAN
Please-please stop. D-don't.

The Concealed Figure ignores his pleas, connects the left cable to one shackle chain... and then the right side.

ELECTRICITY SURGES THROUGH THE BODY OF THE YOUNG MAN. HIS BODY CONTORTS. HE SCREAMS. The lights DIM and CRACKLE.

3 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 3

CLOSE ON - The light bulb DULLS. The screams of the Young Man echo through the room.

The Young Woman closes her eyes. Takes SEVERAL FAST BREATHS then... MUSTERS every ounce of strength in her body and...

Her right hand TREMBLES... The Young Woman GRIMACES, in unbelievable agony, but then... HER RIGHT HAND INCHES UP THE IRON SPIKE. Slowly and painfully. PIECES OF BLOOD, SKIN and BONE cling to spike as the hand moves up.

The light bulb returns again to normal. The screams stop.

The Young Woman gives a final hard push and... FREES HER RIGHT HAND. Blood pours from the wound.

No time to waste. She turns her attention, strength to her left hand... ever-so-slowly (and painfully) it moves.

4 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2** 4

CLOSE ON - The jumper cable attaches to the metal and... ELECTRICITY SURGES THROUGH THE YOUNG MAN'S body. HE SCREAMS.

5 **INT. CABIN - TORTURE ROOM #1** 5

The Young Woman's left hand POPS free. Blood oozes out.

OFF SCREEN: SCREAMS FROM THE YOUNG MAN.

She sits up, goes for the gag, but her fingers cramp in pain. Finally, she unties the knot, removes the gag. She coughs, tries to muffle the noise best she can.

The SCREAMS STOP. Lights return to normal.

Half way free. She goes for the ropes at her ankles, unties them, slides off the table. She grabs a couple rags, ties them around her palm's wounds.

6 **INT. HALLWAY/ TORTURE ROOM #2** 6

The Young Woman opens the door, checks to see if the coast is clear. It is.

We're at the end of a long, dark hallway (more like a tunnel, really). There are two more doors in the hall, one in front of her another to her right. The door across from her is slightly ajar...

YOUNG WOMAN'S POV THRU DOOR - The Young Man dangles from the chains. Suddenly, the Concealed Figure appears between the door and the Young Man.

The Young Woman retreats, but realizes the Concealed Figure has his back to her.

THE YOUNG MAN sees past the Figure, LOCKS EYES with the Young Woman. No hope for himself, his eyes say: **Save yourself**.

The Young Woman fights back tears, mouths the words "I Love you". She carefully opens the door to her right, REVEAL a rickety set of wooden steps. She heads up, just as...

LIGHTS FLICKER. OFF SCREEN: The Young Man SCREAMS again.

The Young Woman quickens her pace. The SCREAMS drown out any sound, until... *just before she touches THE TOP STEP...*

The lights return to NORMAL. The Young Man STOPS screaming. The place goes silent.

The Young Woman's foot TOUCHES THE STEP... A LOUD CREAK RINGS OUT. The Young Woman FREEZES.

7 **TORTURE ROOM #2--** 7

The Concealed Figure TURNS towards the sound.

8 **HALLWAY, STAIRS--** 8

The Young Woman holds her breath. *Did he hear her?*

9 **TORTURE ROOM #2--** 9

A STEEL AXE/SICKLE hybrid (a scary, handmade invention), rusted, save for the razor sharp edge, sticks in a nearby wooden horse. The Concealed Figure SNATCHES the weapon.

YOUNG MAN
SARAH! RUN!

10 **HALLWAY, STAIRS--** 10

Sarah (Young Woman) bolts up the remaining steps.

11 **TORTURE ROOM #2--** 11

The Concealed Figure rushes for the door. In pursuit.

SMASH CUT TO:

12 **EXT. FOREST - SUNSET** 12

SARAH races through the thick forest. Her bare, bloody feet and legs stomping over the hard dirt, branches, shrubs, anything in her way. Not too far behind...

THE CONCEALED FIGURE... (the majority of him still hidden) follows her. WEAPON IN HAND.

SARAH... pushes through some thick brush, but... trips, falls. She SCREAMS IN PAIN, grabs her foot, notices... A LARGE GASH ACROSS THE BOTTOM. Sarah turns, hears...

THE CONCEALED FIGURE.. approaches in the distance.

SARAH... wills herself up, limp/runs away.

13 **EXT. FOREST - CLEARING/CLIFF - SUNSET** 13

Sarah exits the thick woods to discover, to her horror... SHE STANDS AT THE EDGE OF A CLIFF, takes a peek over the side...

SARAH'S POV - JAGGED ROCKS and a small STREAM at the bottom, 200 feet below. A WATERFALL flows steadily nearby.

Before Sarah can fully digest the situation...

THE CONCEALED FIGURE exits the forest, SPINS THE WEAPON in his hand. Anticipating its use.

Sarah FREEZES in her spot. Breaths get shorter, heavier. Her eyes dart in every direction. *What to do?*

The Concealed Figure TAKES ONE STEP FORWARD and... SARAH JUMPS OFF THE CLIFF. Rather that fate than the other.

The Concealed Figure walks up to the edge, looks over...

AT THE BOTTOM... Sarah's dead body lays twisted and bloody among the rocks. The waterfall crashes next to her. BLOOD mixes with the water turning it a deep RED.

<u>CUE TITLE</u>: TIMBER FALLS...

DISSOLVE TO:

14 **EXT. HIGHWAY - WEST VIRGINIA - DAY (HELICOPTER 2ND UNIT)** 14

A black four-door VW Passat cruises the interstate. A Gortex duffel is strapped to the roof.

15 **I/E. PASSAT (MOVING) - DAY** 15

MIKE WARREN, late 20s, with a devilish grin and looks to kill, sits at the wheel. Even a flashy pair of sunglasses can't mask the twinkle in his eye.

SHERYL JAMES, late 20s, rides shotgun. This beauty's got it all: toned bod, sharp mind and a heart-stopping smile.

An opened bag of chips sit in her lap. A couple of Diet Cokes in the cup-holders. She cradles a cellphone MP3 player.

MIKE
Come on, hit me.

SHERYL
(Flipping through tunes)
Chill...I gotta find -- alright.

MIKE
You got one?

Sheryl hits the “Play” button.

MIKE
“Warning Shots”, Thievery Corporation.

Mike grins. Sheryl rolls her eyes.

MIKE
Come on. Next one.

Sheryl scrolls again, hits play.

MIKE
“Bullets” by the Editors.

Sheryl frowns. Mike grins and shoots her a wink.

SHERYL
You loaded these songs. You don’t need to be so impressed with yourself.

MIKE
I know I don’t have to be.

SHERYL
I haven’t even heard of half these bands.

MIKE
It’s called good music. You should try to familiarize yourself with it, instead of listening to the crap you do.

SHERYL
I listen to crap?

MIKE
Hurts me to be the one to tell you.

SHERYL
I’m sure it does.

MIKE
You gotta be more like me, baby. Think new, fresh, cutting edge. I'm looking for the next Beatles, U2 or Radiohead.

Sheryl scans through the MP3 player, spots one and smiles.

SHERYL
So, where does this band fall into that group?

The music starts. BOY'S DON'T CRY, "I WANT TO BE A COWBOY" blares.

SHERYL
Fresh, new or cutting edge?

Mike immediately begins to backtrack.

MIKE
How'd that get on there?

SHERYL
You loaded the songs. You tell me?

MIKE
Must be a mistake.

SHERYL
Says here you've listened to it 86 times.

Busted.

SHERYL
Is this true? Have you always wanted to be a cowboy?

Sheryl spies more...

SHERYL
You also got "Men Without Hats" greatest hits? I didn't know they qualified for a greatest hits album. Can you break me off a little "Safety Dance"?

Mike reaches for the MP3 player.

MIKE
Okay, give me that.

The Passat speeds past a "West Virginia" state sign.

16 **EXT. NATIONAL PARK ENTRANCE - DAY** 16

The sun BURNS above. The Passat turns into the park.

17 **EXT. PARKING LOT, RANGER STATION - DAY** 17

The Passat rolls into a dirt parking lot. Next to the lot is the Ranger Station.

18 **INT. RANGER BASE STATION - DAY** 18

Maps and local artifacts adorn the walls. A display of some of the local animals, stuffed of course, including a giant bear, fill in the gaps.

Mike and Sheryl enter. They take in the place. Mike heads toward the Ranger's desk while Sheryl eyes the decor.

SAM, 65, a round-faced RANGER with a grumpy disposition, a hearing aid in his right ear, sits behind a desk. He continues working, scribbling on something as Sheryl and Mike wait. And wait. Then...

MIKE
Good morning.

Sam holds up a "wait a second" finger. After a beat...

SAM
Now what can I do you two for?

Sheryl spots some fliers tacked to a bulletin board. Hiking gear for sale, Tour Info, National Park History, etc.

MIKE
Well...ah...

SAM
First time here and you're not quite sure where to begin.

Sheryl grabs a National Park Information flier.

ANGLE ON - There are pictures, an Emergency Contact Information, Guided Tour Info, etc.

SAM
Something like that.

SHERYL
Precisely like that.

Sam stands, grabs his lower back, a recurring discomfort. As he digs around for something...

Sheryl notices, on the board...

ANGLE ON - A flier for a young missing couple. Below that...

ANGLE ON - A photo of a girl: “Sarah Travers”(from the opening scene).

Sheryl studies it and shakes off any concern by locking arms with Mike at the desk.

SAM
Get you started with one of these.

Sam grabs a map and lays it out in front of the couple.

SAM
How long you folks hiking for?

MIKE
Two days. Heading out early Sunday.

SAM
Well, if you move at a decent clip, you could hit the summit by midday tomorrow. Should still give you time to take it all in and make it down.

SHERYL
Any particular path?

SAM
You folks experienced hikers?

MIKE
We’ve done some ah--

SHERYL
(interrupting)
No. Nothing like this.

SAM
For first-timers, I recommend either Willow Creek Bridge or Donner Trail.

SHERYL
Donner Trail? As in “The Donner Party?”

SAM
I’m not sure of the name’s origin. They’re the two paths we regularly patrol. Something happens and you’re on one of the other trails, it might be awhile before we find you.

MIKE
Where do we camp?

SAM
Unless it says not to, you can set up where you like. Just make sure when you turn in that you extinguish your fire. Oh, and this here's bear country. They're not animals to fool with. You see one, you head the other way, especially if he's feeding. If the bear thinks you're getting in the way of his food, that's all she wrote.

Sheryl warily eyes the stuffed Bear in the station.

SHERYL
(Sarcastic)
Great.

SAM
You got yourself a first aid kit?

MIKE
Nurse Betty here's my first aid kit.

Sam looks confused...

SHERYL
Don't mind him. I'm a nurse.

SAM
Good for you. The question was, do you have a first aid kit?

SHERYL
Yes, we have a first aid kit.

SAM
Great, see how easy that was.
(Moving on)
It's off-season, park's pretty quiet. Even more than usual. You may run into a few locals, but--

SHERYL
People live up here?

SAM
We have a few generations of families that have called these mountains home. Most of 'em are friendly. Respect their land and they'll respect you.

Mike twangs and air banjos, “Dueling Banjos” from ‘Deliverance.’ Sam is not amused. Sheryl fights her temptation to laugh.

MIKE
Sorry.

SAM
(Moving on)
Base is just outside, to the left. At about two miles up there’ll be a junction where you can pick your path.

MIKE
Thanks.

Mike and Sheryl offer a smile and quickly exit.

19 **EXT. RANGER BASE STATION - DAY** 19

Mike and Sheryl exit. They burst out laughing.

TIME CUT TO:

20 **EXT. PARKING LOT, RANGER STATION - DAY** 20

Mike digs through his backpack, double-checking everything. What he doesn’t show Sheryl... wrapped in some socks: a .38 Revolver. He tucks it discreetly away.

Sheryl checks her bag as well. She clips a blue hikers’ towel to her waist. Mike checks his cell phone. No service.

MIKE
You getting anything?

Sheryl checks her phone and shakes her head “no.”

MIKE
I’ll lock them in the car.

SHERYL
I’ll take mine.

MIKE
Why?

SHERYL
Just to annoy you.

MIKE
Seriously...

SHERYL
In an emergency, I'd rather have a phone that may not work up there, than not have a phone that may work up there.

Huh? Mike shakes his head, puts his phone in the glove compartment.

Sheryl tucks her phone and the flier into a side pocket of her backpack. Zips it shut.

ANGLE ON - Mike's keys and his Boston Red Sox key chain. Mike locks the door.

MIKE
Okay, we all set?

SHERYL
(Excited)
Yup.

MIKE
Let's do this.

Mike pulls on his backpack, starts walking. Sheryl doesn't move. She eyes their tent still resting on the car's roof.

SHERYL
Hey, Einstein. What do you think, leave the tent or maybe take it with us?

Mike swallows his pride and retreats to the car.

MIKE
I was just seeing if *you* were paying attention.

Mike comes back to the car for the tent. Sheryl shakes her head and smiles.

21 **EXT. BASE TRAIL #1 - DAY** 21

The mountain is breathtaking. Nature at its best.

Mike and Sheryl have begun their ascent.

SHERYL
It could be fun.

MIKE
Not a chance. High School reunions serve only two purposes... to try to
(MORE)

MIKE (cont'd)
rehash so-called glory days if you were popular or to gloat if you were a spaz and are now filthy rich, banging a super-model.

SHERYL
So what were you?

MIKE
Me? I was a stoner.

SHERYL
So what does that mean?

MIKE
How the hell am I supposed to remember? I was high all the time.

Sheryl swallows some water, checks her compass.

Sweat rolls down Mike's forehead, stinging his eyes. Sheryl doesn't have that problem. She's wearing a red bandana.

MIKE
Where'd you get that bandana?

SHERYL
It's cute, right? I stopped by that Army-Navy store on Grover yesterday. Keeps the sweat out of your eyes.

MIKE
And when you were buying it, you didn't think that maybe...

SHERYL
Oh...well...it was the last one...

MIKE
The last one?

SHERYL
Yeah...

MIKE
The entire Army-Navy store... sold out?

SHERYL
Completely. There was some sort of run on bandanas at the last minute.

Sheryl stifles a CHUCKLE. Mike shakes his head, then... she pulls out a GRAY BANDANA, hands it to him.

SHERYL
Here... You big baby.

Sheryl turns, as she does... Mike pinches her behind, she playfully SHRIEKS, hustles away from him, but he pursues her, as they both CRACK UP, they spill off the trail...

OFF THE PATH... Mike and Sheryl continue their horseplay, when... SHERYL LOOKS DOWN, SCREAMS!

A BLOODY, MUTILATED FOX LAYS INSIDE A RUSTED BEAR TRAP. The Steel jaws of the trap have sliced the body in two. The kill looks fresh.

MIKE
Fucking nasty.

SHERYL
What is it?

MIKE
Looks like it's a, or was, a fox.
Come on.

Mike and Sheryl head back to the path.

ANGLE ON - The MUTILATED, BLOODY FOX.

21A **EXT. BRIDGE ON BASE TRAIL - DAY** 21A

Mike and Sheryl hike over a small wooden bridge.

22 **EXT. BASE TRAIL #2 - DAY** 22

Mike and Sheryl reach a small clearing. There are a number of signs pointing toward different trails. (Donner Trail, Willow Creek Bridge, Timber Falls, etc.)

Sheryl grabs the map and some water. Mike swigs some water, munches on trail mix, takes a peek in the guidebook.

SHERYL
What do you think? "Cannibal" Trail
or the other one?

MIKE
Guidebook says a couple of these other
trails lead to some pretty sweet
views.

SHERYL
We're not Lewis and/or Clark. We're
gonna stick to one of the ones the
Ranger said.

IDA (OS)
You folks need some help?

IDA FOSTER, 40s, approaches, wheeling some supplies in a handmade wagon. She is worn, haggard, but has a friendly, smile. She wears a flannel shirt, old jeans and dirty boots.

MIKE
We're just going over our options here.

IDA
Well, take it from me, any way you choose, you can't go wrong.

SHERYL
The Ranger at base suggested Donner Trail or...

IDA
...Willow Creek Bridge. I think Sam only knows those two trails. Well. Between those, I'd pick Donner Trail. Willow Creek will shoot you to the top, but there's not as much to see. Donner weaves through Peddler's Point, it's a better hike and prettier all around view.

SHERYL
(To Mike)
What do you think?

Then, she notices a ring on Sheryl's finger.

IDA
That's a pretty ring.

SHERYL
Thank you.

IDA
Not your traditional wedding ring, but it's all the same in the Lord's eyes. How long have you two been wed?

Sheryl and Mike trade looks.

SHERYL
Oh... we're not married. Not yet anyway.

Mike shoots her a look: "not yet?"

SHERYL
It's a ring my father gave me for graduation.

IDA
(embarrassed)
Oh, I'm sorry. You just looked like you was married is'all. Both so beautiful.
(Beat)
I'm just an old fashioned silly-bird. I need to mind my own business.

SHERYL
No, it's fine.

MIKE
(changing topics)
Which one of those trails got the best clearings?

IDA
Clearings? Neither will give you much in the way of clearings. But, there's another path, this one here.
(Points to the map)
Timber Falls. Its got some beautiful vistas and one of the prettiest falls you'll ever see.

MIKE
Sounds perfect.
(To Sheryl)
Yeah?

IDA
Well, I'll leave you to it. Last thing you need is me fussing'round you, taking you from your private time.

SHERYL
Thank you.

MIKE
Yeah, thanks for the tip.

Ida walks off, but stops only a few feet away.

IDA
I'm just gonna say it and go, but if you two were to marry... I bet the Lord would bless you with a happy, healthy and handsome child. Good luck and God bless you both.

Sheryl and Mike don't know how to respond. Ida leaves. Once out of earshot...

SHERYL
I suddenly feel the need for confession.

MIKE
(Still lingering on...)
Not yet? Love taking your shots, don't ya?

Sheryl shoots him a stern, but playfully sexy, look.

SHERYL
When I see an opening.

MIKE
(Checks map)
That path she was talking about winds through these falls. What do you think?

SHERYL
I think... if you get eaten by a bear and there isn't a Ranger around, I'm not carrying what's left of you down this mountain.

MIKE
And they say romance is dead.
(Smiling wide)
Timber Falls it is.

They throw on their backpacks and head on their way.

MIKE
Who's Lewis and/or Clark?

SHERYL
You really were stoned through high school.

As Mike and Sheryl trek up the path...

ANGLE ON - The directional sign, "Timber Falls"

23 **EXT. TIMBER FALLS TRAIL #1 - DAY** 23

Looking back down on the thin path. FIND - Sheryl and Mike continuing their trek. (SPLINTER UNIT)

Mike maneuvers around a massive tree. He freezes. Gestures for Sheryl to be quiet and mouths the words, "Don't Move."

Sheryl stops, startled. Mike motions towards...

A MOUNTAIN STAG, with magnificent antlers, chews on a plant in the distance.

Sheryl quietly slides out her digital camera. Snaps a photo of the animal.

The Stag stops chewing and looks at them. After a long beat, the Stag skips away through the trees.

Sheryl watches the animal disappear, smiles.

Mike removes his backpack and crosses to Sheryl. He helps remove her backpack and kisses her. She kisses him back.

ANGLE ON - Sheryl's heart-shaped locket through her shirt.

MIKE
You're going to lose that out here.

SHERYL
It's fine. I never take it off. Not since you gave it to me. Betcha don't remember...

MIKE
...February 27, 2006.

Sheryl stares incredulously, romantically at Mike. Speechless.

MIKE
I remember every moment with you.

SHERYL
I've got you so whipped.

They kiss. Sheryl climbs onto Mike's lap. He leans back, better positioning, places his hand down, when...

MIKE
OUCH! FUCK!

Mike brings his hand back up. BLOOD trickles out of a SMALL CUT across his palm.

SHERYL
What?

MIKE
My hand... Something stuck it.

Sheryl quickly examines the cut. Mike quickly becomes flustered, woozy. He turns away from the wound.

SHERYL
It's okay. It's not too deep. Let me get the first aid kit.

Sheryl rummages through her bag. Mike, in more psychological discomfort than physical, looks away wincing.

Sheryl returns, wipes the blood away best she can. She applies some peroxide...

MIKE
Fuck. That stung.

SHERYL
Gotta clean the wound, baby.

24 **OBSCURED POV - THROUGH TREES--** 24

From a distance... A SICKLE BLADE enters frame, pulls a branch aside. Sheryl attends to Mike's wound.

The POV narrows... solely on SHERYL.

25 **TIMBER FALLS, TRAIL #1--** 25

Mike looks at Sheryl, a twinge of embarrassment in his eyes.

MIKE
You know me and blood... we don't do so well.

SHERYL
I know.
(She finishes)
All done.

OFF SCREEN: CRUNCH of something stepping on a thicket.

Sheryl glances toward the sound. Mike admires the dressing of the wound.

MIKE
Not bad, Nightingale. Not bad at all.

SHERYL
Did you hear something?

Mike follows her eye-line. There's a softer CRUNCH.

MIKE
It's probably the deer.

SHERYL
The deer went in the other direction.

Mike’s demeanor suddenly becomes cold, creepy.

MIKE
Maybe it’s someone, or something, stalking us.

SHERYL
Quit it.

MIKE
Something inhuman watching our every move.

SHERYL
I said, knock it off.

MIKE
Something coming for you, Sheryl.

Sheryl straps on her backpack.

SHERYL
Just when I think there’s hope for you.

MIKE
What?

SHERYL
You’re an asshole.

Sheryl walks away.

MIKE
This is a joke. You’re not really mad, are you? Sheryl...?

She turns the corner and is out of sight.

MIKE
I’m sorry!
(Under his breath)
Unbelievable.

Mike’s in disbelief. He grabs his backpack, heads after her.

MIKE
Sheryl!

He turns the corner, looks up, but doesn’t see her. The path winds like a snake.

MIKE
Sheryl, wait up!

Mike moves up the winding path. He stops, eyes searching. Something's wrong.

The path opens up. Mike can now see a hundred yards ahead, but... No sign of Sheryl.

MIKE
(Calls out)
Sheryl?! This isn't funny.

Silence.

Two birds SCREAM and fly from their perch overhead. Mike eyes the birds, then takes off.

Mike's heart-rate increases. He moves quickly up the path, a steep incline. He brushes past a bush and stops. Lying just off the path... <u>SHERYL'S BLUE HIKER'S TOWEL</u>. He picks it up.

MIKE
Sheryl?!

No reply. His heart now POUNDING.

Mike moving faster. Up ahead, he stops again, finds... <u>SHERYL'S RED BANDANA</u>.

MIKE
Sheryl!

Silence.

Mike picks up the bandana. He's flying. He cuts through some tiny evergreens, off the path...

26 **EXT. JUST OFF THE TRAIL, TIMBER FALLS #1 - DAY** 26

Mike freezes when he sees... Sheryl's backpack lies against a tree. A few feet farther along, her cut-off jean shorts. Next to them... her shirt. But no Sheryl, until...

SHERYL (OS)
Good old Hansel. Following the trail of bread crumbs.

Mike turns to see Sheryl lying against a rock, wearing just her bra and panties. She smiles at him coyly. Mike exhales deeply. Relieved, but fuming.

MIKE
You bitch.

SHERYL
Doesn't feel good to be teased, does it?

Okay, he had that coming.

MIKE
Truce?

SHERYL
Truce.

He takes her in. She's quite a sight. He sits down next to her. They kiss. Then... Mike breaks the embrace.

MIKE
Don't disappear on me again.

Sheryl mouths the words, "I promise." Crosses her heart.

He leans in, they kiss again. Soft and sweet at first. Then it deepens.

Sheryl rubs his chest and removes his shirt. They kiss again. Harder this time. Their hands all over one another.

Mike slides his hand under Sheryl's panties, between her legs. She moans softly. Sheryl unhooks her bra and is about to remove it, when:

DARRYL (O.S.)
Hey, Brody, Lonnie. Check this out.

DARRYL, 30, a skinny local with a twisted smile and LONNIE, 20's, a slob, emerge from the forest. They are followed by...

BRODY, 35, scruffy and unshaven, their ringleader. Brody clutches a shotgun in one hand and a weathered sack in the other.

DARRYL
Looks like we got ourselves a little party.

Brody and Darryl ogle Sheryl. She tucks herself behind Mike, who shifts quickly into protective mode. She snaps her bra back closed.

MIKE
We were just moving our way up the mountain.

LONNIE
You were moving your way'round more than just that.

Sheryl eyes her discarded clothes. Darryl spots them too. He grabs the shorts, SNIFFS them.

DARRYL
(Referring to the smell)
Like a peach.

Mike tries to seem relaxed and friendly.

BRODY
You folks best be careful about what you do up here... Never know who's watching.

MIKE
Appreciate the advice...I think we learned our lesson.

Brody nods as he looks them up and down.

LONNIE
You city folk, ain't ya? Up from Charleston roughing it, seeing how the "other" half lives?

MIKE
No, we're from Virginia, just up for a weekend trip. And, uh... you folks live up here?

Brody glances at Darryl and Lonnie, then back at Mike.

BRODY
It's easy to spot the city folk. It's like they're trying to be friendly, when really they don't want to be.

MIKE
I think you just startled us is all.

Sheryl looks over at...

...Lonnie sticks his tongue between his fingers, rapidly flails it about.

Uncomfortable silence.

MIKE
We'll just be on our way.
(Re: Sheryl's shorts)
May I have those?

A bold move from Mike.

DARRYL
Finders keepers.

Long beat. Tension high.

BRODY
Darryl.

Brody concedes, gestures to Darryl to give the shorts back.

Darryl reluctantly obliges.

Mike passes them to Sheryl who slides them on. Darryl and Lonnie soak in every inch of Sheryl as she does.

Mike takes Sheryl's hand. They make a move, but... Brody stops them with the barrel of his shotgun.

BRODY
Where you runnin' off to?

LONNIE
Yeah, we just getting acquainted and shit.

Mike glances down at the barrel that runs across his chest. He can no longer hide his fear.

MIKE
We just want to get a little further along before the sun sets.

Darryl eyes the sky. The sun beams down through the trees.

DARRYL
Plenty of time'fore that.

MIKE
Look. We don't want any trouble. We just want to be on our way...

BRODY
And why do you suppose we mean to make trouble?

Mike looks down at the gun. Brody smiles a yellow smile.

BRODY
You folks enjoy the spirits?

MIKE
Excuse me? The what?

DARRYL
Spirits.

LONNIE
Booze!

MIKE
Sure. Yeah.

Brody hands Darryl the shotgun and drops his sack. Brody pulls a mason jar with clear liquid out of the sack.

BRODY
Why don't you try a taste of this?

Brody unscrews the cap and offers the jar to Mike. Mike eyes Sheryl. Clearly she doesn't think it's a good idea.

Mike accepts the jar, hesitates, then takes a sip. He squirms, winces, but forces it down. Mike turns red and coughs. Brody and Darryl are loving it.

DARRYL
Betcha never tasted nuthin'like that?

Darryl would win that bet.

BRODY
Fifty bucks.

Mike has no idea what he's talking about.

BRODY
I'll sell you the jar for fifty bucks.

DARRYL
(Ogles Sheryl)
Or maybe we could do us a little trade.

MIKE
Let me get my wallet.

Mike opens a zipper on his backpack, rummages around.

ANGLE ON - INSIDE THE BAG... the .38 Revolver.

Mike thinks about grabbing it. Sheryl shocked to see the gun. She tenses up.

ANGLE ON - Brody. <u>The shotgun</u>.

Mike thinks, then...

SHERYL
Fifty bucks sounds like a bargain.
(To Mike)
Pay the man.

Mike reaches past the gun and grabs his wallet. He counts out the cash, hands it to Brody. Brody smiles, hands the jar to Mike.

BRODY
Pleasure doing business with ya. Take care now.

Brody nods at Mike and Sheryl, walks off down the trail. Darryl grins at Sheryl, follows Brody.

LONNIE
Should you tire of your present company... just holla and I'll come running with bells on darling.

He smiles a creepy wide smile. He turns and catches up to the others.

Once they are out of sight... Mike takes a moment to gather himself. Sheryl grabs her shirt still on the ground, puts it on.

MIKE
Are you okay?

SHERYL
You brought a gun?

No response. Sheryl picks up her towel and bandana.

SHERYL
Why did you bring a gun?

MIKE
Same reason you brought your cellphone. Better to have it and not need it. To protect us.

SHERYL
Lotta good it just did.

Sheryl turns from Mike, walks back to the path.

MIKE
(Then, call out)
You want to go back?
(No response)
Sheryl? I'm sorry.

SHERYL
We should have stuck to one of the patrolled paths.

Sheryl charges ahead, back to the path.

MIKE
(Under his breath)
Fuck.

Mike gets up, grabs his bag and follows Sheryl.

27 **EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY (2ND UNIT)** 27

The sun begins to set, basking the mountain range in a magnificent light.

28 **EXT. WATERFALL - TIMBER FALLS TRAIL #2 - DAY** 28

Mike and Sheryl move right along. Still not speaking.

The path forks at a BEAUTIFUL WATERFALL. Mike stops, faces the falls, turns to see... Sheryl behind him, catching up. As she does, she slips...

MIKE
You alright?

SHERYL
(balances herself)
Yeah.

She's about to walk past him, but he reaches for Sheryl's hand and holds it.

MIKE
I'm sorry.

SHERYL
Do you know how many times I've had someone die on me? How many children? I stopped keeping count.

MIKE
I thought... I wasn't thinking. What do you want me to do?

SHERYL
Get rid of the gun.

MIKE
What... now? Out here?

She holds firm.

MIKE
I can't just leave it here in the woods, some kid could find it.

SHERYL
Then get rid of the bullets now and when we get home, you get rid of the gun.

Mike thinks about it. His instincts SCREAMING not to do this, then...

SHERYL
Please.

Mike relents. He removes his backpack, ZIPS it open. He pulls out the gun, opens it, spills the bullets out.

Mike WITH A DEEP BREATH, TOSSES THE BULLETS into the woods.

SHERYL
Was that all of them?

MIKE
Yes.

Mike steps back to Sheryl, they hug.

SHERYL
Thank you.

CRACK! A strange sound, like wood snapping, startles Sheryl. Mike turns as well. Their eyes WIDEN.

CRACK! The FIGURE emerges from the clearing, practically landing on top of them. It's...

CLYDE, a Park Ranger, mid-50's, friendly. He's got a weed cutter in his hands, wears a PAIR OF WORK GLOVES. He's just as surprised to see them.

Sheryl and Mike breath a sigh and offer him a smile.

CLYDE
Oh. Didn't mean to startle you folks. Just clearing some of the brush off
(MORE)

CLYDE (cont'd)
the path. We had some heavy rains this past week, knocked some trees and branches down. One of the new recruits was supposed to do yesterday, but... if you want something done right, you gotta do it yourself.

MIKE
It’s fine. We were led to believe this trail wasn’t regularly patrolled.

CLYDE
It’s not, but... It’s one of my favorite spots, so I often find an excuse to swing by.

SHERYL
It’s gorgeous.

CLYDE
Yup. There are a couple more falls in the park, but none quite so... inviting as this one. Now don’t take my word for it, you can see for yourself... How long’s your stay?

SHERYL
Just til Sunday.

CLYDE
Yeah, no. The other falls are clear on the other side. It would take you a couple nights just to get there.

SHERYL
Maybe next time.

MIKE
This is a quickie trip. Just getting out of the city for a couple days.

CLYDE
The city, huh. Which? If it’s Charleston, I wouldn’t blame ya. Whole place smells like feet. I gotta haul myself all the way down to the hospital there for my yearly because the darn HMO’s rules and regulations won’t let me visit the local Doc. Not my cup of tea at all, but if you like it there, then...

SHERYL
No, we’re not from Charleston.

MIKE
But apparently we look like we are.

SHERYL
We live in Alexandria. It’s just outside of D.C.

CLYDE
Oh. I’ve been there, few years back. Now that city I like. Lotta beautiful churches if I recall correctly. Which congregation do y’all belong to?

MIKE
Um... Not sure. Sheryl keeps track of all that for us. Sheryl?

Sheryl gives Mike the “you’re an asshole” look. Then...

SHERYL
Uh... We’re between congregations at the moment.

Awkward.

CLYDE
Well... I should get back to work. Sun’ll be down soon and that path ain’t gettin’clear on its own.

Clyde walks off, until...

SHERYL
Excuse me... Sir?

Sheryl doesn’t know his name. Clyde stops, turns back.

CLYDE
The name’s Clyde.

SHERYL
Clyde, would you recommend a nice spot nearby to make camp for the night?

CLYDE
Be happy too... Let’s see... Oh, I got it. “Five Corners” will be perfect. It’s just a bit up the ways here, near the Lake. It’s five large rocks which sit in a clearing with a view of the whole park. The rocks retain the heat from the day, so if you set up camp between them you won’t be so cold.

SHERYL
Sounds perfect.

MIKE
Thanks.

CLYDE
Just doing my job. You have fun and be careful. Good evening.

Clyde tips his cap and disappears.

29 **EXT. FIVE CORNERS - DAY** 29

Mike and Sheryl hike up a steep slope. As they step through the woods, they look upon...

FIVE LARGE ROCKS, arranged in an awkward semi-circle.

They walk into the circle, take off their backpacks.

SHERYL
This is incredible.

Mike opens the tent pouch, starts removing the many parts.

SHERYL
Ranger said there's a lake near by.

MIKE
What?

SHERYL
The lake. I'd kill to rinse off.

Sheryl makes a move...

MIKE
Whoa. Wait a sec. It'll be dark soon.

SHERYL
Where's your sense of adventure?

She takes off.

MIKE
Sher. Seriously. Let's wait 'til morning.

30 **OBSCURED POV--** 30

On SHERYL as she stops. Looks out towards the water.

CLOSE ON - THE CONCEALED FIGURE'S EYES. Two different colors, with his left being void of almost all color. Also notice SCARRING around the left eye, there's no eyebrow and his skin is pale and splotchy.

The Concealed Figure holds all his attention on...

31 **FIVE CORNERS--** 31

Sheryl realizes he's right and walks back over to Mike.

SHERYL
Fine.

Mike stares at the many assorted parts of the tent, the sheet of instructions laid out. He holds one of the poles, which consists of separate links connected by a string. He has no idea where to begin.

SHERYL
Do you know what you are doing?

MIKE
I think its pretty obvious that I don't.

Sheryl laughs.

32 **EXT. TREES, OUTSKIRTS OF FIVE CORNERS - CONTINUOUS** 32

The Concealed Figure retreats into the forest.

DISSOLVE TO:

33 **EXT. FIVE CORNERS - NIGHT** 33

STARS FILL THE SKY. Crickets chirp, but aside from that, peace and quiet reign.

A fire CRACKLES. A tent for two has been pitched. Dirty pots, pans litter the area. Dinner's over and done.

Mike and Sheryl cuddle by the fire. A sleeping bag wrapped around them.

MIKE
That was... the worst dinner ever.

SHERYL
(Beat)
You cooked.

MIKE
Yeah, I'm aware.
(Beat)
You know what would make this evening perfect? Moonshine. I got a whole jar of it. There's a sentence I never thought I'd say. "I have a jar of moonshine." Matter of fact, I've got enough to share with our entire congregation...

SHERYL
... in Charleston.

MIKE
Our home city, of course. But I should start with you... Would you like some moonshine?

Sheryl smiles, shakes her head playfully.

MIKE
Then what would you like?

SHERYL
I'd like to fuck you.

MIKE
Not very Christian of you.

SHERYL
I'm more Old Testament.

MIKE
What's that mean?

SHERYL
Not sure. But I think it's the nastier of the two books.

Sheryl pulls Mike into her, they kiss. Strong and deep. Sheryl abruptly breaks the kiss, enough foreplay. She stands up, pulls Mike into the tent with her.

34 **INT. TENT - NIGHT** 34

Sheryl pulls off her sweatshirt, then the T-shirt. Mike kicks off his shoes, drops his pants.

Mike unbuttons Sheryl's jeans, tugs them off.

Sheryl unhooks her bra, tosses it aside. Mike slides her panties down her legs and off.

Few things in life can be described as perfect. Sheryl's naked body is one of them.

Sheryl pulls Mike's boxers down, climbs on top of him. She reaches down and slides Mike inside her.

Sheryl KISSES Mike. He slides his hands around Sheryl's butt. Sheryl paws his chest, bites his lower lip HARD.

The lovers move in unison. Perfection.

35 **EXT. TENT - FIVE CORNERS - NIGHT** 35

Inside the tent, Mike and Sheryl continue. Their campfire still burns. Suddenly...

A SHADOW creeps into frame. Then a BOOT. Someone's outside their tent.

36 **INT. TENT - NIGHT** 36

Breaths get shorter, stronger. Sheryl and Mike build to climax. They don't/ can't notice...

A SHADOW passes across the wall of the tent.

The last final moments before... climax. The lovers EXHALE. Sheryl crashes on top of Mike. He wraps his arms tightly around her.

TIME CUT TO:

36 A **EXT. TENT - NIGHT** 36 A

The last FLAMES on the fire slowly BURN OUT.

36 B **INT. TENT - NIGHT** 36 B

Mike and Sheryl spoon, their hands and fingers messed together as one.

MIKE
I was good. I mean, even better than usual.

SHERYL
If you don't say so...

MIKE
... if I don't say so myself, yeah. Top notch performance. What, you disagree?

SHERYL
Nah, it was good. Do you think I had anything to do...

MIKE
No. All me.

SHERYL
Fine.
(Beat; cautious)
I liked what the old woman said about us earlier.

MIKE
What did she say?

SHERYL
That she thought we were married.

MIKE
(Groans)
You are relentless.

Mike gets up, starts dressing.

SHERYL
I wouldn’t be a proper girlfriend if I didn’t nag every now and then.

MIKE
I get it, but it makes me feel like the bad guy every time. Which makes me feel like shit.

SHERYL
I’m sorry. I didn’t mean that. Where are you going?

MIKE
Do out there, what you did in here.

SHERYL
What’s that?

MIKE
Put out the fire.

Mike exits. Sheryl lies back down, exhales in frustration.

37 **EXT. TENT - FIVE CORNERS - NIGHT** 37

Mike, now fully dressed, pours a bucket of water over the campfire. In the background, bags hang from a tree (just as Ranger Sam asked them to do.)

A smoldering mist of smoke is all that's left of the fire. Mike drops the bucket, heads for the tent, when... He suddenly stops, notices...

ON THE GROUND... A FRESH MUDDY FOOTPRINT. Mike compares his boot to it. It's not the same size.

Mike surveys the area. All's quiet now. But an uneasy feeling has crept back into his bones. Mike climbs back inside the tent, zips it shut.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

38 **EXT. FIVE CORNERS - SUNRISE** 38

The sun peeks over the horizon and through the clouds. A BIRD crows.

39 **INT. TENT - DAY** 39

Sheryl's eyes SNAP open. She's nestled comfortably in Mike's arms. He's still asleep.

40 **EXT. TENT - FIVE CORNERS - DAY** 40

Sheryl, now dressed, towel in hand, bandana wrapped around her hair, vomits behind some trees.

After, she takes a couple deep breaths, swishes some water in her mouth. A beat later, she heads off.

41 **EXT. LAKE - DAY** 41

Sheryl stands on the lake's shore, checks a couple times over both shoulders. Then, she takes her sweats and bandana off. Lay them on top of her towel.

Sheryl, wearing only her locket, carefully steps into the water... it's cold. But nevertheless her desire to feel clean outweighs the temperature discomfort.

On her own little count to three... She dunks her head below the water. As she drops out of sight, REVEAL--

ON LAND, IN THE DISTANCE... THE CONCEALED FIGURE STANDS ON THE SHORE, WATCHES HER.

IN THE WATER... Sheryl POPS up, turns towards land and... THE CONCEALED FIGURE is gone.

Sheryl comes back to land. She grabs her towel, dries her hair and pats herself dry. She pulls on her sweatpants,

starts to tie her bandana around her head, and turns straight into... THE CONCEALED FIGURE.

CLOSE ON - THE STEEL SICKLE/ AXE

SHERYL SCREAMS. The sound resonates over...

42 **INT. TENT - DAY** 42

Mike opens his eyes. Something woke him up, not exactly sure what. He sits up and yawns, stretches his stiff body. He's alone in the tent.

43 **EXT. TENT - FIVE CORNERS - DAY** 43

Mike, now dressed, stands behind a tree, takes a piss. He shudders slightly. It's cold.

Mike finishes his business, grabs his water bottle and takes a long drink. He peels off the bandage from his hand. It looks fine today.

He looks around, but no sign of Sheryl.

44 **EXT. LAKE - DAY** 44

Mike walks up to the water, looks in both directions. Nothing. A pang of concern registers.

He kneels down, cups some water and splashes it over his face, hair. As he opens his eyes, he notices something.

In the wash of the waves, sparkling in the sunlight. <u>It's Sheryl's locket</u>. The chain broken. He picks it up...

MIKE
(Calls out)
Sheryl!

Mike looks around. He's completely alone. The blood drains from his face. Mike pockets the necklace.

He starts into the water... *did she drown?* Just as he gets knee deep...

OFF SCREEN: A SCREAM CRIES OUT!

Mike stops, turns back looking at the forest.

MIKE
Sheryl!

He hustles out of the water, heading for the woods.

45 **EXT. WOODS NEAR STREAM - DAY** 45

Mike hustles through the thick patch of trees and hits the steep little slope. He flies up the slope but loses traction and slips, BANGING his knee.

MIKE
Fuck!
(Top of his lungs)
Sheryl!

Mike pushes himself up, continues on.

46 **EXT. WOODS NEAR STREAM #2 - DAY** 46

Mike's really moving now. He scoots through the first patch of trees and hustles down a slope.

47 **EXT. CLEARING, TIMBER FALLS TRAIL - DAY** 47

Mike emerges from the woods, drops into a clearing. Looking around wildly...

POV OF MIKE - Has he been here before? It all looks the same? Not even sure which direction he just came from.

MIKE
Sheryl!

Still nothing. Mike swallows. *What to do now?*

SMASH CUT TO:

48 **EXT. WOODS #1 - OFF TIMBER FALLS TRAIL - DAY** 48

TIGHT ON MIKE as he races through the trees. HIS LEGS trample over rocks, dirt, shrubs. Then...

Mike TRIPS, falls down HARD. He lifts his forearm to reveal BLOOD, SCRAPES and a LONG SHARP SPLINTER sticking out.

The sight of it almost makes Mike puke right then and there.

Mike grabs hold of the splinter, turns his head... takes about a thousand short quick breaths and... PULLS THE SPLINTER OUT! BLOOD SQUIRTS ACROSS HIS FACE.

He removes the GRAY BANDANA from his back pocket, wraps it around his wound.

Mike lays back, stares up into the sky. Tries to catch his breath, calm down. Then...

Faint sound of LAUGHTER.

Mike sits up. Again, faint sound of LAUGHTER.

Mike stands, takes a couple of steps toward the sound. MORE LAUGHTER. Mike's got the scent, takes off in its direction.

49 **EXT. WOODS #2, OFF TIMBER FALLS TRAIL - DAY** 49

Mike follows the VOICES through a thick patch of trees. He stops at the top and looks down.

POV OF MIKE - Walking along the main path, obscured by the trees, is Darryl and Lonnie. They drink, LAUGH about something. Lonnie carries some fishing poles.

Mike's about fifteen feet above them. He narrows his focus in on...

MIKE'S POV - Darryl twirling something in his hand. It's Sheryl's blue hikers' towel.

Mike turns red with fury. He looks back down...

MIKE'S POV - Darryl, a SHOTGUN slung around his shoulder.

Mike looks around and spots a large pointed stick lying near a tree, parallel to him.

50 **EXT. TIMBER FALLS TRAIL #4 - DAY** 50

Darryl and Lonnie continue along, until...

OFF SCREEN: A LOUD CRACK.

Darryl stops, turns. Lonnie looks at Daryl.

LONNIE
What is it? Hear something?

Darryl holds his look into the woods, then...

DARRYL
Nah. It's nothing.

Suddenly, Mike LEAPS from behind a tree, WHACKS the surprised Darryl across the face with the stick. Darryl drops like a sack of potatoes.

Mike locks eyes with a terrified Lonnie.

MIKE
Where is she!?

Lonnie pauses, frozen. He then takes off, disappearing through the trees.

Darryl lies on the ground, MOANING. He pushes himself up to his knees. BLOOD POURS from a fresh gash across his head.

Mike grabs Darryl's shotgun, aims at Darryl.

DARRYL
Whoa... take it easy.

MIKE
Where is she?

DARRYL
Who? What the fuck you talking about?

MIKE
What did you do to her?

DARRYL
I didn't fuckin' do nothing.

MIKE
WHERE IS SHE?!

DARRYL
I don't know!

Mike CRACKS Darryl across THE JAW with the barrel.

MIKE
You have Sheryl's towel...What the fuck did you do to her?!

Darryl's a mess, his nose busted. He gags on blood and teeth. Mike stares at the bloody desight that is Darryl. Even Mike has to turn away for a moment for this. Then...

DARRYL
Foun' towel.

MIKE
What?

DARRYL
I foun' the towel.

MIKE
You found it? That's you're fucking story, you inbred fuck?!
(Points gun at Darryl's head)
Stop fucking lying or I will kill you!

DARRYL
Don' kill me...Please...I foun' it...
Up...Up the paf back 'dere...just a
bit ago... fuckin'swear!

Mike's finger itches the trigger. He's turning red. Breathing hard, heavy. Then... Mike relents. Lowers the weapon, turns his back to Darryl, stares into the woods.

The tension fades for the moment. But only a moment.

DARRYL
Didn't think you had dat in you, city
boy.
(Looks at his shirt; the blood)
Shit... I just got dis shirt.

Darryl, while Mike is distracted, seizes his opportunity, reaches behind...

ANGLE ON - Darryl slides a POCKET KNIFE from his back pocket.

DARRYL
Damn shame you lost dat fine piece
o'ass. Something dat sweet don't
come'round every day. Even for pretty
folk like you.

MIKE
Shut the fuck up.

ANGLE ON - Still concealed from Mike, Darryl opens the pocket knife, the BLADE fully extended.

DARRYL
You best hope you find her'fore I do.
'cause I will enjoy tearing her ass
apart.
(Mike turns, faces Darryl)
And when I'm done there, I will cut
her eyeballs out and skull fuck her.
(Mike simmers to a boil)
Any luck, Brody's already beat me to
it.

MIKE
Sonofabitch!

Mike takes a step towards Darryl, when... Darryl LUNGES OUT AT MIKE, POCKET KNIFE IN HAND.

Darryl misses with his initial swipe, but it's enough to knock Mike down, the shotgun falls to the side.

Darryl pins Mike to the ground, tries to dagger the knife into him, but Mike grabs his wrist. They struggle. Darryl PUSHES down, the knife INCHES CLOSER TO MIKE'S CHEST, until...

Mike HEAD-BUTTS Darryl, sending the skinny Hick off him. Darryl rolls away in pain.

Mike scrambles, crawls for... the shotgun. He grabs it.

Darryl regroups, turns around, but is met with...

WHACK! MIKE bashes Darryl's face with the butt. This knocks Darryl completely out.

Mike stands over Darryl. A beat. Then...

MIKE
SHERYL!

51 **EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY (2ND UNIT)** 51

The morning fog has dissipated as streaks of sunlight pierce the cloudy skies.

52 **EXT. FIVE CORNERS - DAY** 52

Mike arrives back at their campsite, shotgun in tow. He freezes, completely floored.

Everything is gone. The tent, the backpacks, the mess kits, everything. Even the fire pit.

Mike looks around, turning, looking...completely helpless.

He SNAPS open the shotgun - he's got two shells. He closes it, heads back into the woods.

53 **OMIT** 53

54 **EXT. WOODS #3, TIMBER FALLS TRAILS - DAY** 54

Mike moves deeper into the woods. He's a mix of paranoia and determination.

Mike pauses, catching his breath, when... A FEW BLOOD DROPS OF BLOOD LAND ON HIS FACE. Mike wipes his face, looks at the blood. *What the fuck?*

A couple more DROPS hit him. Mike LOOKS UP...

A MANGLED, MUTILATED DEER HANGS IN THE TREES, secured by coarse thick ropes.

Mike takes a terrified step backwards, unaware... A FEW FEET BEHIND HIM LAYS A RUSTED, STEEL BEAR TRAP.

Mike, still mesmerized by the blood and the deer, continues backing up... getting closer to the bear trap... closer... his foot HOVERS OVER THE CENTER OF THE TRAP...

SNAP! CRUNCH! MIKE STEPS IN THE TRAP, THE JAWS CHOMP DOWN ON HIS LEG!

Mike SCREAMS IN AGONY! He drops to the ground, stares at his leg, now a bloody mess of flesh and steel.

MIKE

HELP!?!?!

Mike writhes in pain on the ground. His eyes watering. The pain UNBEARABLE. Then...

MIKE'S POV - Someone or thing appears, stepping from the forest. They come closer. THE SUN BLASTS DIRECTLY BEHIND The FIGURE keeping their identity hidden.

Mike's eyelids flutter, can't determine who/what it is. The pain overwhelms him. He doesn't care any longer. Then...

Ida bends down next to Mike.

IDA

Michael, can you hear me? Michael...

Her words fade out. He promptly PASSES OUT.

CUT TO BLACK.

ON BLACK: A SHRIEKING WHISTLE SOUNDS.

FADE IN:

55 **INT. IDA'S CABIN - DAY** 55

CLOSE ON - Mike's eyes SNAP open, dart side to side, blink.

REVEAL - Mike lays on a ragged couch. The place is dark and dusty. A glance around...

Gaslights hang in the corners. A stack of logs rest next to an old fireplace. Just off the main room is a kitchen alcove, with a coal stove. On the stove a WHISTLING TEAPOT.

Mike's memory slowly comes back. He leans up when...

MIKE

Ow!

A sharp pain shoots through his body. Mike reaches for his leg. The tourniquet conceals the damage. A damn towel is wrapped around where the wound is. A bandage has replaced the Gray Bandana on his arm.

Ida enters the cabin from the back door, into the kitchen. She removes the teapot from the burner. The whistling stops.

IDA
Look who's up.

MIKE
Where am I?

IDA
You're in my home, Michael. You gave me quite a scare. I thought I lost you.

Ida grabs a wet wash cloth, wrings it out over a basin and walks back to Mike.

IDA
Lucky the snap didn't break the bone, just bruised it. I know that's of little comfort now, but trust me, it's a good thing. That dirty trap however's prime for spreading infection, need to finish cleaning out that wound and then I'll get some "evening primrose" in you. Same stuff the Indian Tribes used it back in the day to heal, well... just about everything. So's do I.

Ida unwraps the tourniquet, examines the wound.

IDA
Try and relax.

Ida cleans the wound. Mike winces. He can't watch.

MIKE
Thank you. For saving my life.

IDA
You don't have to thank me. Up here, we take care of one another. That's the only way any of us survive.

MIKE
Um...
(Thinks...)
I'm sorry, but I don't know your name.

IDA
Oh for the sake of sunshine... how rude a host am I? Name's Ida Foster.

Ida moves to the kitchen, grabs a mason jar with clear liquid. It looks just like the jar Mike bought from Brody.

MIKE
Ida, I need some help.

IDA
I'm moving as fast as I can, sweetie.

MIKE
No, not me. It's Sheryl. My girlfriend. You met her with me yesterday. Something's happened to her. She was gone this morning when I woke up. I looked everywhere and I couldn't find her. We need to call someone. A Ranger. Somebody. We need to find her right away. Do you have a phone?

IDA
I'm sorry, but I don't. Never really had use for one.
(Beat)
I do have a radio. We can call down to base if you'd like.

Ida comes back to the couch.

IDA
After we take care of you.

MIKE
I'm fine, Ida, please... if you could call now.

IDA
You want to lose this leg? Cause that's what you're risking. Soon as we're done, I'll call. Okay?

Mike concedes. Ida hands a second rag to Mike.

IDA
Bite down on this... I ain't gonna lie... Lotta pain about to hit you sweetheart.

Mike puts the rag in his mouth. Ida dips the used cloth in the moonshine. He closes his eyes TIGHT, and... Ida applies the moonshine to the wound.

Mike SCREAMS through the cloth.

IDA
It's okay. It's almost over.

Ida repeats. Mike SCREAMS again. His eyes water.

Ida offers her palm. Mike opens his mouth. The cloth falls into her hand.

Mike BREATHES HEAVILY, coming down from the pain.

Ida crosses to the kitchen, disposes of the two wash cloths and grabs a larger towel. She walks back to Mike and wraps his calf with the towel.

IDA
We'll get some of that primrose in you and you'll be good as new.

MIKE
Ida? The radio. Please... Can you call down please?

IDA
I'll take care of it right now.

Ida heads to a closed door on the far side of the room. She opens and enters, sure to close the door behind her.

Mike relaxes, as best he can anyway. Until...

KNOCK, KNOCK.

BRODY (OS)
Ida, you in there?!

MIKE'S POV - Through a small slit in the drapes, Brody waits outside.

Ida exits the room, heads for the door.

MIKE
(Whispers)
He's looking for me.

IDA
(Whispers; concerned)
Why's that?

BRODY (OS)
Ida!

MIKE
(Whispers)
I think he had something to do with
Sheryl going missing.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

IDA
(Whispers)
I'll take care of it.

BRODY (OS)
Ida, lemme in!

IDA
I'm coming!

Ida helps Mike stand, re-directs him to the kitchen alcove. He winces all the way. She leans him up against the near wall so that he is out of view of the door.

Ida goes to the front door, opens it halfway, revealing an agitated Brody, shotgun in hand.

Suspicious, Brody tries to peek past Ida into the cabin. She doesn't budge.

BRODY
What took you so long?

IDA
What do you want, Brody?

BRODY
I'm looking for a man hiker.

IDA
This "man hiker" alone or wit someone?

BRODY
He had a lady friend, but... I'm just
looking for him now.

ON MIKE - Listening nervously.

IDA
Well, I ain't seen no one in days.

Brody glares at her. She glares right back. Brody again tries to see past her into the cabin, but she blocks him.

IDA
What'd he do you for anyway?

BRODY
He busted Darryl's face in with a shotgun. Left him a mess of blood and teeth. Nearly killed him.
(Beat)
You spot anyone you don't know, you be sure to find me.

IDA
Fine.

Brody eyeballs Ida one last time, then leaves. Ida watches him go, closes the door and heads to the alcove.

IDA
He's gone. Brody and those boys are a pain in the backside. I'm sure that cousin of his had it coming.

Ida leads Mike back to the couch.

MIKE
What did the Ranger say? Does he need to speak to me? When is he coming?

Ida heads back to the kitchen, grabs a mug and pours hot water into it. She dishes a small spoonful of yellow powder into the hot water.

IDA
Sorry, I wasn't able to reach anyone.

Ida stirs the powder in as she walks back to Mike.

MIKE
God damnit!

Ida pauses...then:

IDA
Please don't take the Lord's name in vain in this house.

She GLARES LONG, COLD and HARD at Mike, until...

MIKE
I'm sorry.

IDA
Drink this.

Ida hands him the steaming mug. Mike's mind races.

MIKE
Something's not right.

IDA
I'm sure they're just on rounds and will be back any minute. We'll try them again and we'll find Sheryl. You'll see. She probably just took a wrong turn up here, ended up in the middle of "don't know where." Happens lots of times.
(Looks to the mug)
Please drink up, Michael, it will make you feel better.

Mike holds the mug, stares at the drink. He puts it to his lips but then stops, looks at Ida. She stares at him.

Unnerved by the stare, Mike lowers the mug without sipping.

IDA
What's wrong?

MIKE
How did you know my name?

IDA
(Confused)
Excuse me?

MIKE
Michael. You keep calling me Michael. You did it just now. You did before, just after I woke up. You called me Michael. Nobody calls me Michael.

IDA
I'm sure you're mistaken. You musta told me before.

MIKE
No, I would have told you "Mike." Only my grandmother, who's dead, ever called me Michael.

IDA
Well, how else could I have known your name?

ANGLE ON - IDA'S BOOTS.

MIKE
(Beat; thinks...)
On my driver's license and credit cards, it says Michael. If you stole my wallet from the campsite... that's how you'd have known.

Long beat.

IDA
You're accusing me of stealing your wallet? I saved your life. Twice. Why would I steal your wallet?
(Mike doesn't respond)
Now, just drink your primrose...

MIKE
Fuck the primrose!

Mike TOSSES the mug across the room. It SHATTERS.

Mike lifts himself up. Despite the pain, he heads for the room Ida went in to make the radio call.

IDA
Where do you think you're going?

MIKE
I want to call the Ranger myself.

IDA
NO!

Ida springs to her feet, jumps in front of Mike.

MIKE
I'm getting in that room, Ida.

Mike maneuvers around her, when... Ida grabs the iron fire poker by the stove, holds it like a baseball bat.

IDA
I can't let you in there.

Mike takes a step forward. Ida SWINGS the poker. Nearly hits Mike. Mike jukes left, she SWINGS again. Misses.

MIKE
Where is Sheryl, Ida? She's in that room, isn't she?

IDA
You sinners are all alike. I heard you last night. Spitting in the face
(MORE)

IDA (cont'd)
of the Lord and his laws. Dining on the sins of the flesh.

FLASH BACK TO:

56 **EXT. TENT - FIVE CORNERS - LAST NIGHT** 56

Inside the tent, Mike and Sheryl make love. Their campfire still burns. Suddenly...

A SHADOW creeps into frame. Then a BOOT.

REVEAL: IDA STANDS OUTSIDE THE TENT.

BACK TO:

57 **INT. IDA'S CABIN - DAY** 57

Suddenly, Ida appears in a new light...

IDA
You and your bitch whore girlfriend will atone for your sins.

Mike LUNGES forward, grabs hold of the poker before Ida can swing it again.

THEY STRUGGLE, CRASH UP AGAINST THE WALL! The poker falls to the floor.

Ida JUMPS on Mike's back, wraps her arms around his throat.

Mike spins Ida around in circles, then SLAMS Ida up against the wall. The two fall to the floor.

Mike pushes himself up, but before he can get away...

IDA GRABS HOLD OF HIS BEAR TRAP WOUND, SQUEEZES!

MIKE SCREAMS IN AGONY! Instinctively, Mike kicks Ida in the face, boot to nose. Ida's head snaps back, then falls face first on the floorboard.

Mike is PANTING, glances at Ida. She's out cold.

Mike pushes himself up, limps to the door. He grabs the handle, PUSHES IT OPEN...

58 **INT. SEWING ROOM, IDA'S CABIN - DAY** 58

Mike enters to find a sewing machine, some yarn, an antique radio, but more importantly, No Sheryl. He steps over to the radio, when he notices...

AN INCH THICK LAYER OF DUST COVERS THE RADIO. He swipes it with his finger. This thing hasn't been used in years.

Mike turns, steps on a throw-rug laying in the center of the floor... HIS FOOT SINKS a little. Mike tests the floor board again. It's RICKETY. He pulls the rug out...

REVEAL: A TRAP DOOR. Mike grabs the latch, lifts it open.

59 **INT. TRAP DOOR STAIRCASE** 59

FROM BELOW... Looking up past a weathered, worn and wooden staircase up at Mike.

Carefully, Mike makes his way down the steps, into...

60 **INT. CHAPEL - CABIN BASEMENT - DAY** 60

Religious artifacts, lots of them. Crosses, photos of Jesus, statues of Mary, etc. Don the walls, shelves... everywhere.

On the far side of the room... like an altar shrine... NINE LARGE GLASS JARS FILLED WITH LIQUID...

INSIDE EACH JAR - HUMAN FETUSES, all in various stages of development and DEFORMITY. Each jar is labelled with their own individual bronze nameplate (#1, MATTHEW... #2, JOHN... #3, PETER... #4, LUKE, etc...).

THE LAST JAR - The fetus is closest to term, maybe 8 months along). The nameplate reads, "TIMOTHY."

Mike, completely freaked out, backpedals, bumps into AN IRON DOOR. He turns the handle, opens it...

61 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 61

It's pitch black as Mike opens the door. Next to the door, a light switch... He flips it ON.

Sounding like small gunshots, a series of overhead lights TURN ON illuminating a long, narrow, curved hallway. At the far end... THREE DOORS. (RECOGNIZE THIS FROM THE OPENING SCENE.) A sound. It's distant, muffled...indistinguishable. Mike stirs, hearing the faint, muted sound from the end of the hallway.

Mike staggers, leans against the wall for support. He's woozy, but determined. He proceeds down the hall, towards the doors.

Just as Mike passes underneath a light... POP! THE LIGHTS EXPLODES. SPARKS, GLASS SHOWER onto Mike. As he brushes himself off.

A SCREAM cries out.

MIKE
Sheryl!?

Mike moves faster, reaches the end of the hallway, faces the door. He turns the knob, pushes it open, and...

62 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 62

Mike steps into the room, the light from the hall SPILLS INTO THE ROOM, falls across...

Sheryl, tied to a beam that extends from the ceiling to the floor, a coarse rope secures a gag in her mouth. She's bruised with a lot of nicks and scratches.

Sheryl and Mike's eyes lock. Euphoria, pain all at once.

MIKE
Oh my God.

Mike runs to her, touches her face. He checks the ropes tying Sheryl. They're very secure.

MIKE
I need something to cut you down, baby.

Sheryl tries to motion to the other side of the room.

Mike follows her gaze... Searching wildly... scanning the room... a tool bench... tools... TOOLS!

ON A TOOL BENCH - A litany of the conventional and unconventional. A hammer, screw drivers, axes, a FLASHLIGHT, then, finally... in the middle of bunch... A HUNTER'S KNIFE.

Mike grabs the knife, hobbles back to Sheryl. He slides the blade between her cheek and the rope, SLICES. Several tense moments later... the rope breaks.

Mike tosses the rope and gag away. They kiss.

MIKE
Are you okay?

SHERYL
Get me out of here. Hurry.

Mike starts cutting the ropes around her wrists.

SHERYL
He'll be back soon.

MIKE
Who's he?

OFF SCREEN: A LOUD THUD resounds. *Where did it come from?*

Not wanting or waiting to find out, Mike doubles the effort.

SHERYL
Come on, come on, come on...

SNAP! Finally, the ropes tear. Sheryl's free. Just as...

ALL THE LIGHTS SIMULTANEOUSLY GO OUT. COMPLETE AND TOTAL DARKNESS SURROUND THE YOUNG COUPLE. Sheryl lets rip a short, but loud SCREAM. Mike quickly silences her.

BREATHING INTENSIFIES. Mike and Sheryl take refuge in each other's arms. Then...

Mike remembers... on the tool bench... THE FLASHLIGHT. He feels around for the bench, when... WHACK.

MIKE
Fuck!

He banged his injured leg on something.

SHERYL
(Whispers)
What are you doing?

Mike reaches the tool bench, feels around. Finds it.

SHERYL
(Whispers)
Mike? Mike?

Mike TURNS ON THE FLASHLIGHT. The beam CUTS through the darkness and onto...

The Concealed Figure, stands face to face with Mike brandishing his axe/sickle.

SHERYL SCREAMS!

The Concealed Figure swings the axe/sickle, slices Mike across the forearm. BLOOD SPRAYS ACROSS THE FLOOR.

Mike YELPS in pain, drops the flashlight and knife.

MIKE
Sheryl, run!

But Sheryl freezes.

He comes at Mike again, but... he eludes the attack.

Mike grabs the flashlight, the only weapon within his reach, and SWINGS, STRIKING THE CONCEALED FIGURE IN THE KNEE, he drops to the ground.

The Concealed Figure grabs Mike by the throat, runs him as hard and fast as he can against a wall!

Sheryl's frozen in fear.

He SQUEEZES his throat harder, tighter. Mike can't breathe.

Mike smacks the Concealed Figure in the face, squirms, all to no avail, until...

Mike JAMS his THUMB INTO HIS EYE. He SCREAMS, DROPS Mike. They both fall to the floor.

The fallen flashlight's beam illuminates Sheryl backed in the corner.

MIKE
(To Sheryl)
Get the fuck out of here! Now!

Finally Sheryl runs out of the room...

63 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 63

Sheryl feels her way out by touching the wall...

64 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 64

As the Concealed Figure writhes in pain...

Mike catches his breath, attempts to stand, only... his body buckles under the pain.

He throws a look to the Figure, then crawls over to the tool bench. He pulls himself up using the bench for support. He haphazardly feels for a weapon... any weapon.

He grabs a hammer, turns and...

The Figure grabs Mike's wrist, then HEAD-BUTTS MIKE between the eyes. He falls to the floor. Out cold.

The Concealed Figure holds his injured eye with one hand, grabs the SICKLE/AXE with the other.

65 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 65

Sheryl reaches the iron door, but stops. Looks back into the darkness.

SHERYL
Mike?
(No response)
Mike?

Still no answer. Then... Sheryl spots the light switch, FLIPS IT... THE LIGHTS SNAP ON!

Suddenly, THE CONCEALED FIGURE APPEARS OUT OF THE DARKNESS!

SHERYL SCREAMS!

HE LUNGES FOR SHERYL, but misses. She runs through the door, into...

66 **INT. CHAPEL - IDA'S CABIN - DAY** 66

... Sheryl rushes into the room, but trips on something. When she gets up, the first thing she sees... THE FETUS JARS!

She coughs violently, almost pukes. She stumbles, hurries up the trap door steps...

A moment later...

The Concealed Figure pops through the iron door. For the first time we see the Concealed Figure wholly...

THIS IS DEACON. Half his body scarred, burned. He stands well over six feet tall, muscles rippling everywhere. A frightful sight.

He peers up the trap door steps, pursues Sheryl...

67 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - DAY** 67

Sheryl BURSTS through the front door, running for the woods.

Deacon exits the cabin, spots Sheryl. Runs after her.

68 **EXT. WOODS #4 - TIMBER FALLS TRAIL - DAY** 68

SHERYL runs as fast as she can. Breaking branches in her way, leaping rocks. Anything to get away from...

DEACON follows. This is his terrain, turf. He moves quickly and efficiently through the brush.

SHERYL looks back, and as she does... trips over some tree roots. She falls FACE FIRST INTO A GIANT PUDDLE. She pushes herself out of the puddle. She's soaked, but doesn't stop. She resumes running.

DEACON... closing the gap.

SHERYL, confused, scared and lost, looks around wildly. Has no idea where she's going. Then suddenly she hears something. She looks down a slight hill...

SHERYL'S POV - A RANGER TRUCK drives along a gravel road.

SHERYL
Thank you God...
(At the top of her lungs)
HELP!

Sheryl darts down the hill, and falls out onto...

69 **I/E RANGER TRUCK/ GRAVEL MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY** 69

The RANGER TRUCK SLAMS on the brakes, inches from running over Sheryl. She SLAMS her arms down on the hood.

Clyde, startled beyond belief, looks out at Sheryl. He gets out of the car, goes to her. She HUGS Clyde tightly, starts crying. He looks at her... the blood, cuts, etc.

CLYDE
Oh my stars, what happened to you?

SHERYL
(Out of breath)
You have to help me. I was kidnapped. My boyfriend came... And this man's chasing me. He's chasing me right now.

CLYDE
Calm down. I can't make heads or tails of what you're saying.

SHERYL
He's coming. He's right behind me.

Clyde looks up into the woods from where Sheryl came, but... all's peaceful at the moment. No Deacon.

CLYDE
Look, miss, there's no one there.

SHERYL
Oh my God, Mike.

ANGLE FROM DOWN THE PATH - Clyde, his back to us, consoles Sheryl. Deacon steps into frame. Sickle/Axe in hand. He starts toward Clyde and Sheryl.

CLYDE
It's going to be fine, Miss. I promise you. Everything's going to be fine.

Sheryl pries her face from Clyde's chest.

SHERYL'S POV - Deacon's five feet behind Clyde and closing.

SHERYL SCREAMS. CLYDE HOLDS ONTO SHERYL.

Off her look, Clyde turns... DEACON AND CLYDE STAND FACE TO FACE. The moment's frozen. For too long.

Something's not right.

CLYDE
Deacon, what's going on? How the heck did she escape?

Sheryl looks at Clyde, in shock. Deacon lowers his head, ashamed.

CLYDE
Want something done, gotta do it yourself.

Clyde removes a black, wooden club from his belt... Sheryl turns, about to run, when... CLYDE CRACKS HER ACROSS THE BACK OF THE HEAD WITH THE CLUB.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

70 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - DAY** 70

SHERYL'S POV - OUT OF FOCUS, WOBBLY. LIGHTS, a rainbow of FUZZY COLORS DANCE BEFORE US. Slowly, bring into focus... Sheryl coughs, gags on something.

SHERYL'S POV - She lifts her arms to discover her wrists are tied together tightly.

SHERYL'S POV - Ida enters the room carrying something. Sheryl's breath quickens. Ida walks right up to Sheryl. She places a FLOWER WREATH in her hair, adjusts it to fit.

IDA
Perfect. Just perfect. You are lovely as a summer's day.
(Checks her watch)
It's almost time.

Sheryl catches her REFLECTION in a small wall mirror.

71 **INT. CHAPEL - DAY** 71

ANGLE ON - A ROPE looped through a hook in the ceiling. FOLLOW THE ROPE DOWN... PASS A PAIR OF BLOODY AND BRUISED HANDS, WRISTS... keep going... end on Mike.

Mike's passed out. He dangles in the middle of the room. He wears an old, moth-eaten sports jacket and slacks. A rope gags his mouth.

ANGLE ON - the SICKLE/AXE. As it moves towards Mike...

Deacon, a black ring surrounds his injured eye, steps in front of Mike, holds the blade CENTIMETERS from Mike's eye.

An eye for an eye?

Mike wakes and... immediately freaks out. He tries to shake loose, but can't. Deacon stares at him, but...

CLYDE (O.S.)
Deacon!

Clyde enters. He wears a long garment around his neck, carries a bible.

CLYDE
That's enough. Get him ready.

Deacon backs off. He undoes a slipknot on the far wall, which causes Mike to come CRASHING to the floor. Deacon lifts Mike to his feet, positions him.

It's only now Mike gets a gander at the room.

The FETUS JARS adorn the far wall. There's a giant WOODEN CROSS hanging over a makeshift altar. CANDLES anywhere and everywhere.

An old phonograph, one that you CRANK to play, rests in the corner. Clyde places the needle down on a record, CRANKS THE WHEEL. The MUSIC kicks in, CLASSICAL RELIGIOUS... It's hollow, full of static and futz.

Mike watches... HIS EYES OPEN WIDE, as...

The iron door slowly CREAKS open.

ANGLE ON - A FILTHY PAIR OF WHITE DRESS SHOES. Ropes secure the ankles so movement's limited to inches at a time.

Shimmying into the room, wearing a dusty, old wedding dress and a flower wreath in her hair is Sheryl. Her wrists still bound. Her mouth gagged.

Mike and Sheryl take each other in. Tears spring to Sheryl's eyes. She takes another jerky step closer.

Ida is visible behind her, guides her towards Mike. She positions her next to him so that both face the altar.

Clyde glances to Ida who silences the music.

CLYDE
And Jesus answered and said unto them, "Each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband."

IDA
Amen.

CLYDE
And so, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, I ask you Michael... and you Sheryl, do you accept the sacred covenant of marriage?

Mike and Sheryl stare at Clyde. Neither flinch.

Clyde glances to Deacon, who immediately steps forward, touches the sickle blade to Sheryl's throat.

CLYDE
I'll ask again... Do you accept this covenant of marriage?

Sheryl nods immediately. Mike nods too.

Clyde signals for Deacon to step back. He obeys.

CLYDE
Then by the power vested in me, I pronounce you man and wife.

Clyde signals to Ida.

Ida removes Sheryl's graduation ring from her finger. She then slides TWO TARNISHED GOLD BANDS, one on Sheryl's finger, the other on Mike's.

Clyde unties the rope securing Mike's gag in his mouth, removes it.

MIKE
Why are you doing this? We did nothing to you people. Let us go!

CLYDE
You may kiss the bride.

MIKE
You fucking people are fucking sick!

Clyde's temper flares...

CLYDE
(Stern and cold)
Do not use that type of language in this house again. Now... kiss the bride or...
(Gestures to Deacon)
... he'll cut off your lips.

Mike stares in horror at Clyde, turns to Sheryl.

MIKE
I love you.

Mike kisses her briefly on the cheek.

Clyde smiles satisfied, nods to Deacon. He immediately lifts Sheryl up and throws her over his shoulder.

MIKE
What are you doing?

Deacon carries her from the room. Sheryl CRIES.

MIKE
LET HER GO! SHERYL!
(To Clyde)
Let her go!...Please, let her go!

Clyde pulls the ropes, hoists Mike back into a dangling position. He secures the knot before exiting the room.

MIKE
SHERYL!
(To Ida)
(MORE)

MIKE (cont'd)
Please. Don't hurt her. Whatever it is you want, I'll give it to you.

IDA
I know you will.

She stuffs the gag in, secures it in place with the rope. She ties the knot. Perfect.

Ida exits the room. Mike is alone.

Mike tries to yank his hands through the knot. His wrists and hands turn red, his face is flushed...the knot is too tight. He stops.

Mike takes a breath and tries again. His face and hands are beet red. He pulls and pulls...but the rope doesn't budge. Mike exhales. It's no use. He dangles there, helpless.

72 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 72

Resting under the FULL MOON, sits the cabin.

72 A **INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT** 72 A

Mike still dangles by his wrists. Clyde enters.

Clyde unties the end of the rope on the floor. The rope UNFURLS, Mike DROPS to the ground.

Clyde picks him up, sits him in a nearby chair. Mike's wrists, ankles and mouth still bound and gagged.

CLYDE
Gonna untie your mouth, now. Have a little "man to man" talk.

Clyde undoes the gag in Mike's mouth.

MIKE
Please... It's not too late. Let us go. We won't tell anyone.

CLYDE
(Beat)
How well do you know your bible, Michael?

MIKE
Jesus Fucking Christ...

Clyde SLAPS Mike across the face.

CLYDE
I told you before to watch that mouth, mister.

MIKE
Fuck you.

Clyde PUNCHES him, not once, but twice. He readies a third.

CLYDE
You through?

Mike spits some blood on the floor. Nods.

CLYDE
I'll ask again... how well do you know the bible?

MIKE
Not very.

CLYDE
That's okay. It's fine. That's why I am here... teach you the way things are and the way they should be.

73 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 73

Sheryl sits in a chair in the middle of the room. Still gagged. She wears a new outfit. A handmade dress with a small crest embroidered over the heart. IT'S SIMILAR TO THE ONE WORN BY SARAH (GIRL FROM THE OPENING SCENE OF FILM).

Ida pulls tight the rope securing her wrists to the arms of the chair. Satisfied.

IDA
I'll be right back.

Ida exits the room. Deacon stands by the door. He and Sheryl alone together.

Sheryl tries not to make eye contact.

Deacon stares at her. Longingly.

DEACON'S POV - On Sheryl's chest, expanding and contracting with every breath.

ON DEACON - SLOWLY PUSH INTO TIGHT CLOSE UP

DEACON'S POV - Sheryl, a heavenly glow encircles her (and her gag mysteriously gone), turns to Deacon. A look of calm and lust in her eyes.

SHERYL
I want you, Deacon.
(Jump Cut to...)
I want you to fuck me. Hard.

ON DEACON - His stare deepens.

Sheryl, the heavenly glow gone, her gag back in place. Watches Deacon. She squirms, cries.

74 **INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT** 74

Clyde sits in a chair next to Mike.

CLYDE
Lord knows the will of a man gets tested. Cruelly most times. But the righteous persevere. They do what needs to be done, even though they don't want to. It's what makes a man, a man. Let me tell you the story of Judas, he was one of Jesus's apostles. Judas led Roman Soldiers to the capture and eventual death of our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, is supposedly seated next to Satan, his soul burning in hell forever for this sin. But I don't believe that's the case. I have my own theory. The death of Jesus was predicted thousands of years before Judas ever came along. And for the prophecy to be fulfilled, Jesus had to die. If he didn't, the gates of heaven couldn't be opened for mankind. I don't think, for an instant, Judas wanted to be the one, but... someone had to. Judas helped Jesus, so Jesus could die for our sins. Save us all. And I believe at this moment... Judas is in heaven, despite his sin, because it led to the greater good.
(Beat)
Relations prior to marriage is a sin. You and Sheryl are sinners in the Lord's eyes. And because of those sins, your souls are damned. But Ida and Me, we're gonna give you a chance to save your souls and do the right thing, but... as previously stated, you will need to persevere and show the strength and will of your character. But you'll do it. Because that's what needs to be done.

Mike stares unflinching at Clyde.

75 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 75

Deacon kneels before Sheryl who tries to move, but can't.

ANGLE ON - Deacon lays his scarred hand on Sheryl's thigh.

Sheryl squirms, but that's all she can do. Then...

IDA (O.S.)
Deacon!

Deacon jumps up, backs off.

IDA
You get away from her. Git! Now!

Ida sets a tray she was carrying down, chases Deacon from the room. She shuts the door behind him.

IDA
I'm sorry about that, Sugar. My brother, he's not well.

She retrieves the tray, brings it over closer to Sheryl.

IDA
It's not all his fault. Our father wasn't very Christian and then there was the accident. Along with the scarring, lost use of his vocals. Can't speak a lick. Now, I've spoken to him. What happened with the others won't happen to you. He's promised me that.

What others? What did he do?

IDA
I'm gonna take that out of your mouth now. I brought you some tea, got some primrose in it. Help you relax, get some rest. Okay?

Ida unties the gag in Sheryl's mouth. She coughs a few times. Ida raises the mug of tea to her lips...

SHERYL
Please don't do this. Please let me go. Please..I just want to go home.

IDA
(Cold)
Drink the tea.

Ida brings the mug to her lips again, pours some in Sheryl's mouth. She swallows a big gulp.

IDA
That's better. Good girl.
(Changing topics)
I almost forgot to ask... How does it feel being married?

SHERYL
Why are you doing this?

IDA
I thought you'd be happy about that. All I ever wanted out of life was two things... to be married and to have a baby. The Lord blessed me with Clyde and I thank Him every day for that.

Ida pours some more tea into Sheryl.

IDA
But having a baby's been... complicated.

76 **INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT** 76

Clyde walks over to the fetus jars. Stares at them. A sadness in his eyes.

CLYDE
She can conceive fine... just... can't seem to make it all the way through. Timothy was the toughest... Made it to month eight.

ANGLE ON - The "Timothy" Fetus jar. The most developed of them all.

CLYDE
City Doctor had some fancy mumbo-jumbo words for the condition.
(Beat; turns to Mike)
Breaks my heart every time. That woman was born to be a mother. It's her calling in life. Just like you and Sheryl have a calling.

MIKE
What exactly do you want from us?

The IRON DOOR FLIES OPEN, Deacon emerges, stands over Mike.

77 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 77

Sheryl sways back and forth. Her EYELIDS heavy. The primrose "kicking in."

Ida places her hand on Sheryl's cheek.

IDA
You're young, strong... It's gonna be easy for you. Not like me.

SHERYL
(Barely conscious)
Wh-what...?

IDA
You're gonna have a baby, Sheryl.
(Beat)
<u>My baby</u>.

78 **INT. HALLWAY - CABIN BASEMENT - NIGHT** 78

Deacon drags Mike down the hall. Clyde follows.

79 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 79

The door to the room FLIES OPEN. Deacon drags Mike inside, Clyde right behind them.

To Mike's horror...

MIKE
Oh my God...

Sheryl lies unconscious on top of the table, Ida by her side.

ANGLE ON SHERYL - Each of her limbs tied down with heavy rope. Her legs are spread apart.

MIKE
What have you done to her?

IDA
She'll be out for hours, but she's fine.

CLYDE
Ida'll come back in a little bit, check to see that the deed has been done. If it hasn't...the next time you see your little lady...a piece of her will be missing.
(MORE)

CLYDE (cont'd)
(Cold)
Don't test us on that one.

IDA
Now, we know conception's not automatic. So don't feel like all the pressure's on right now. We're prepared to do this however long it takes. You give us the effort each time, eventually the magic will happen.

MIKE
You're out of your fucking minds.

Clyde grabs Mike's wrist, turns over his palm. Clyde takes a knife from his belt, SLICES MIKE'S PALM.

MIKE SCREAMS. BLOOD POURS FROM THE WOUND.

CLYDE
What did I tell you about the language?

Ida grabs a fresh rag, wraps Mike's hand in it.

CLYDE
Deacon will be right outside that door. The only door. This room has no windows and is buried twenty feet below ground. Cutting to the chase... there's no way out and you can scream yourself hoarse, no one will hear you.

IDA
We'll let you have your privacy now.
(Remembers)
Oh, almost forgot.

Ida goes to the corner where the phonograph sits. She cranks the handle, places the needle on the record.

The record crackles, Pachelbel's "Canon" fills the room.

Deacon, Clyde and Ida exit. They SHUT and LOCK the door behind them.

80 **INT. HALLWAY - CABIN BASEMENT - NIGHT** 80

Deacon stands by the door. Ida and Clyde, holding hands, walk towards the stairs...

IDA
It's gotta work this time.

CLYDE
It will.

IDA
Promise me.
(Beat; he doesn't...)
Promise me, Clyde.

CLYDE
I promise.

Clyde wraps his arm around Ida's shoulder, comforting her.

81 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 81

Mike makes his way to the table, to Sheryl. He pulls himself to his feet.

He takes Sheryl in. She looks peaceful. He runs his good hand through her hair. Tears roll down his cheeks.

Mike checks each of Sheryl's ropes. They are all tightly secured.

Mike haphazardly checks every nook and cranny of the room. But Clyde was right. No way out.

Mike stares at the phonograph... HE KICKS IT OFF THE TABLE, KICKS AND BASHES IT TO PIECES.

VFX: Mike's breathing INTENSIFIES. PUSH INTO TIGHT CLOSE UP... His world is not caving in, it's already caved.

82 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT TO DAY (SPLINTER UNIT)** 82

TIME LAPSE... The night sky rapidly changes from black to blue. The Sun RISES...

83 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - DAY** 83

Sheryl's head falls to the side, bumps the table. She wakes.

She finds Mike is passed out sitting in a chair, his hand holding hers.

The door UNBOLTS, FLIES open.

Mike comes to and glances up as Deacon storms into the room, drags him out screaming.

84 **INT. HALLWAY - DAY** 84

Ida stands just outside the doorway, lets them pass. She slides some surgical gloves on, shuts the door behind her.

ANGLE ON - SHERYL as the door SHUTS.

85 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2 - DAY** 85

Mike, without his shirt, hangs by his wrists from iron shackles secured to the ceiling. (He's hooked up the same way the Young Man was in the opening scene of the story.)

Deacon secures the last of the restraints. Clyde enters, walks straight up to Mike...

CLYDE
Was I at all unclear yesterday?

MIKE
No, but...

CLYDE
Did you understand what was expected of you?

MIKE
Yes, but... How do you expect...

CLYDE
Clearly you did not understand. You did not even attempt relations last evening.

MIKE
What you're asking to do is sick. You're sick.

CLYDE
You didn't have a problem when penetration was a sin, but when it's your wife, it's sick?!? Unbelievable.

Clyde glares angrily at Mike, then heads to the door.

CLYDE
You knew the rules, Michael. I warned you. Now, Deacon, here, will remind you.

Mike turns to Deacon, who stands over the tool bench. DOZENS of sharp instruments of torture lay before him.

Clyde shuts the door on Mike.

86 **INT. MAIN ROOM - CABIN - DAY** 86

Clyde shuts the door. Ida waits, helps him with his coat.

CLYDE
I'm going to be late for work.

IDA
Be home at the regular time?

Clyde removes a set of keys from his pocket... NOTICE THE BOSTON RED SOX KEY CHAIN... They're Mike's keys.

CLYDE
Might be a bit late. I have an errand that needs attending to.

Clyde kisses Ida, exits.

87 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2 - DAY** 87

Deacon stands by the TOOL BENCH, his back to Mike. Deacon grabs several different SCARY INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE, tests them out.

Mike tries to see what he's doing. HORRIBLE SOUNDS, METAL STRIKING METAL, BLADES SHARPENING, ETC.

Deacon finally selects a weapon, turns around...

Mike stares at Deacon who holds a CAT-O'-NINE TAILS in his hand. Deacon walks behind Mike...

MIKE
You don't have to do this. Come on.

Deacon pulls his arm back, WHIPS MIKE ACROSS THE BACK.

MIKE SCREAMS IN AGONY.

88 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - DAY** 88

Sheryl hears MIKE'S SCREAMS, but she's in a predicament of her own.

Sheryl's tied to chair. Her hand is secured to table top. She can't move it. Fingers separated.

SHERYL
What are they doing to him?

IDA
You should concern yourself with what's about to happen to you.

Ida opens a SEWING BOX, but instead of needles and yarn, she removes a CLEAVER.

Sheryl looks at the cleaver, then... to her hand... the pinky finger separated and immobile.

SHERYL
What are you doing, Ida?

IDA
You think you're so much smarter than me, don't you?

SHERYL
No.

IDA
Yes you do. Admit it'cause I can see it in your eyes, darling. With your fancy schools and job and such.
(Realizes)
You think you are better than me.

SHERYL
No, I don't.

Yes she does.

IDA
(Beat)
Might surprise you, but I was quite the student back in the day. Straight A's. Every subject'cept for Science. Infuriated me how they tried to explain away the Lord's creations. Our teacher, Mr. Billings, once said... in the future, humans won't be born with a pinky finger'cause of evolution.
(Frustration building)
Of all the... I shouted, "No! We are created in the Lord's image... not some nonsensical theory by Darwind."

Sheryl stares at Ida, terrified would be an understatement.

IDA
I suppose Mr. Billings and Mr. Darwind can stand up and cheer, because you, little lady... you're about to evolve.

89 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2 - DAY** 89

Mike dangles... HIS BACK CUT, BRUISED AND BLOODY.

MIKE
No more. Please. No more.

Deacon faces Mike, looks him square in the eyes. He walks back to the tool bench, lays the whipping device down.

Mike breathes a touch easier, until...

Deacon reappears, A JAR OF MOONSHINE in his hands. He dips one of his scarred fingers into the liquid and GENTLY touches a wound on Mike's body.

The liquid stings. Mike WINCES.

MIKE
What are you going to do with that?

ANGLE ON - MIKE'S BACK.

90 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - DAY** 90

ANGLE ON - SHERYL'S PINKY.

Ida sits next to Sheryl. She raises the cleaver...

SHERYL
Please Ida, don't. Don't do this.

IDA
You think I want to hurt a pretty thing like you? Pains me, but... until you and your husband obey, my hands, much like yours, are tied.

SHERYL
I know about your condition, Ida. It's not your fault. There are a lot of women that can't carry a baby full term. I know how much you're hurting.

Ida takes her attention from the finger, starts to pay attention to Sheryl.

IDA
You don't know anything about me or what I've gone through.

SHERYL
I'm here for you now. I'll help you. Please.

Ida stares at Sheryl... debating...

91 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2** 91

Deacon SPLASHES THE ENTIRE JAR OF MOONSHINE ON MIKE'S BACK. A BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM RINGS OUT.

92 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 92

Ida and Sheryl turn in the direction of the SCREAM. This seems to bring Ida back from wherever she was, back to the matter at hand...

Ida looks into Sheryl's tear-filled eyes.

IDA
You can help... by following the rules.

Ida CHOPS off Sheryl's pinky finger. Sheryl SCREAMS.

ANGLE ON - SHERYL'S PINKY FINGER HITS THE FLOOR.

93 **EXT. SWAMP - DAY** 93

The SUN burns overhead.

Clyde stands on the banks of a algae covered swamp. He stares out, nervously watching.

Brody, in his beat-up Pick-up truck, pulls to a stop. Exits the truck, approaches Clyde.

BRODY
Clyde!

CLYDE
G'morning, Brody.

BRODY
I stopped by your place the other day.

CLYDE
Ida mentioned.

BRODY
So have you seen or heard anything about that man hiker?

CLYDE
(Beat)
In fact I have. I saw him and his lady leave.

BRODY
When was this?

CLYDE
Yesterday. Just before dusk.

BRODY
Bullshit.

CLYDE
Believe what you want.

Clyde looks out at the swamp, then back to Brody, who never stopped staring at Clyde.

BRODY
I saw their car last night in the parking lot at base. So they didn't leave, "Just before dusk."

CLYDE
Well, I was down at base this morning... car's gone now.

BRODY
Something don't feel right here, Clyde. Between you and Ida...

CLYDE
I don't have time for this...

He starts to walk away, but Brody grabs his wrist tightly.

CLYDE
Take your hand off me, Brody.

BRODY
What do you know about that hiker you ain't telling me?

Brody waits a beat, then lets him go.

CLYDE
I told you, Brody... I saw them leave. Let it go.

Brody watches Clyde head off. He's even more paranoid now than before. What Brody doesn't notice...

ANGLE ON THE SWAMP... Just below the water, sinking, the outline of the back of the Passat.

94 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT (SPLINTER UNIT)** 94

DARKNESS envelops the cabin. A coyote HOWLS.

95 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 95

Sheryl on table, unconscious. Her hand/finger bandaged.

THE DOOR'S THROWN OPEN... Deacon throws Mike roughly to floor. He's tied per usual.

NOTICE: the back of Mike's shirt SOAKED in blood.

MIKE
How do you expect me to do this? Like this?

CLYDE
Do we need to provide you with some more motivation?

IDA
You wouldn't want to put that lovely bride of yours through a day like she had today again, now would you?

MIKE
You'll never get away with this. We have friends and family. They know where we went. They'll come looking for us. They'll find us!

CLYDE
That may very well be... but they won't find your car.

Clyde dangles the keys - HIS KEYS - in front of Mike. Deacon, Clyde and Ida leave.

THE DOOR BOLTS, LOCKS.

Mike limps over to Sheryl, he sees her bandaged hand.

MIKE
Oh baby, what did they do to you? I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

SHERYL
(Without moving, barely audible)
Are they gone?

MIKE
(Surprised)
Yeah. You're awake?

Their entire conversation is no louder than a whisper.

Sheryl turns to face Mike... They kiss.

SHERYL
I didn't swallow that shit she gave me.

Sheryl spies the back of his jersey in a mirror's reflection.

SHERYL
Oh my God. Mike...

MIKE
It's okay. I'm okay.

SHERYL
You're not okay. We're not okay. What are we gonna do?

MIKE
I don't know.

Sheryl takes a moment. Thinks carefully about how exactly to phrase this... Then...

SHERYL
Maybe... we should just give them what they want?

MIKE
What?

SHERYL
If it stops them from hurting you and me... maybe we should...

MIKE
Absolutely not. No fucking way. Forget the fact, that the moment you get pregnant, they'll kill me. Then the moment you give birth, you're dead. Beyond both of those reasons... ain't no fucking way I am going to give them our child.

Tears POUR from Sheryl.

MIKE
For all my coward marriage moments... I've thought about our child. Is that stupid? I picture what he'll be like...

SHERYL
He?

MIKE
Wishful thinking. I picture your heart... your eyes... And I picture us, raising him. Growing old with him.
(Beat)
No. Ain't no fucking way I'm going to give him to them. They keep talking about sins... that would be the worst sin of them all.
(Beat)
I'll get us out of this, Sheryl. I promise you.

95A **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - DAY (MAIN UNIT)** 95A

Birds CHIRP overhead. Sunlight streaks through the clouds.

95B **INT. CHAPEL - DAY** 95B

ANGLE ON - A FINE CLOTH rubs delicately, but firmly one of the fetus jars (Timothy).

Ida finishes, steps off the small stool. The jars sparkle and shine brightly.

She gazes at the fetus jars with love, affection. The pain of lives unfulfilled weighing heavy on her strong shoulders.

The trap door opens, Clyde comes down the steps.

Ida turns to Clyde. A beat...

CLYDE
It's time.

96 **EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY (2ND UNIT)** 96

The morning fog engulfs the mountains.

97 **INT. RANGER BASE STATION - DAY** 97

SAM, the Ranger that greeted Mike and Sheryl, enters sipping a cup of coffee. EVELYN, 20s, a perky and adorable Ranger, works at the desk.

EVELYN
Good morning, Sam.

SAM
Ain't no better than any of the other days, Evelyn, so bring the "glee" down some, would ya?

Sam grabs some papers from his mailbox. Evelyn's used to Sam's moods.

EVELYN
Hey, Sam, do you remember a Virginia couple pass through here sometime Friday?

SAM
Friday? Well...There was one couple, but they didn't say where they were from.

EVELYN
Gal's mother's called three times this morning. Said she hasn't heard from her daughter since before she left and she didn't show up for work yesterday or today.

SAM
She sure this was the park they were coming to?

EVELYN
Yup. Woman's already offering up a reward.

SAM
Damn it. Have her fax some photos up here. Notify patrol.

EVELYN
Been a while since we had a couple go missing. Twelve months ago the last?

Sam crosses to the bulletin board by the door. He studies the flier of the missing couple that Sheryl had noticed.

SAM
(Concerned)
Nine.

98 **OMIT (SCENE HAS BEEN MOVED - NOW 95A)** 98

99 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - DAY** 99

Deacon enters. Clyde and Ida are with him.

MIKE
You don't have to check... Nothing happened.

Clyde and Ida are pissed.

CLYDE
We do appreciate your honesty, Michael. And believe me, we understand your extreme situation, but... Punishment's going to have to be handed down.

Suddenly, Clyde's walkie-talkie goes off.

SAM (V.O.)
Clyde, it's Sam at base, come back.

CLYDE
Go for, Clyde.

Mike screams trying to be heard while Clyde has button pushed.

CLYDE
(To Deacon and Ida)
Restrain him.

Deacon holds Mike, while Ida grabs the gag.

SAM (V.O.)
Yeah, morning, Clyde. Got a missing person's report. Young Couple out of Alexandria. We're printing up some flyers with their photos right now.

MIKE
I told you. I told they'd be coming.

Ida shoves the gag into his mouth, ties it secure.

SAM (V.O.)
When you get a chance, grab some and let's start circulating, huh?

Clyde throws a concerned look to Ida.

SAM (V.O.)
Clyde?

CLYDE
Copy that.

Clyde thinks a beat, then...

CLYDE
(To Deacon)
Get him in the other room. Now.

Concern covers Clyde's face...

99 A **EXT. STREAM - DAY** 99 A

Brody washes out some mason jars. His shotgun rests against a nearby tree. Lonnie smokes pot from his handmade pipe.

A walkie-talkie CRACKLES. Evelyn approaches.

BRODY
Shit. Get rid of the dope.

Brody hides the jars in his satchel. Lonnie quickly tucks his pipe away, fans the smoke away.

EVELYN
Morning, gentlemen.
(She eyes her watch)
Pardon me... Afternoon.

LONNIE
Evelyn, damn, hurts looking at you. When you gonna give it up to me?

EVELYN
Now with a line like that, it's a shocker I haven't already.

LONNIE
You stone cold tease.

EVELYN
Was wondering if either of you had seen any hikers pass by in the last day or so?

Lonnie's about to respond, but Brody cuts him off...

BRODY
What's this about?

Evelyn hands them a flier.

ON THE FLIER - Photos of Mike and Sheryl, name, info, etc.

Brody's eyes light up.

BRODY
These two are missing?

EVELYN
It would seem so. Why, have you seen them?

Brody hesitates and then shakes his head "no".

BRODY
You talk to Clyde about this?

EVELYN
All the Rangers are on the lookout.
Family's even offering up a reward.

BRODY
(Beat)
How much?

EVELYN
Pardon?

BRODY
How much they offering?

EVELYN
Don't exactly know. I'm guessing it's
a fair amount.

BRODY
Well, me and Lonnie will keep a
lookout for you too. Anything we can
do to help.

Evelyn begins walking off.

LONNIE
You change you mind, I'll ride you
raw.

Evelyn ignores Lonnie, moves on her way.

LONNIE
It'd be the best fifteen seconds of
your life, darling!

Brody watches her go. As she disappears, he grabs his gun.

100 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - DAY** 100

Clyde comes up to Ida. She stands over a bar-b-q pit, just
your run-of-the-ordinary backyard variety ones.

CLYDE
Noose is starting to tighten, Ida.

ANGLE ON - A GLASS JUG OF MOONSHINE

IDA
No. You promised. You promised, this
time, would be the time. I want that
baby. You promised.

Ida flips open a silver lighter, SPARKS up a flame. She touches the flame to a piece of kindling, drops it into the bar-b-q.

A FIRE ROARS TO LIFE.

CLYDE
We're gonna have to double our efforts, here.

IDA
Leave that to me.

Ida lifts THREE IRON BRANDS from a long leather bag. She places the heads of the brands into the bar-b-q.

101 **OMIT (SCENE HAS BEEN MOVED. NOW SCENE # 99A)** 101

102 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - DAY** 102

Sheryl sits alone, tied, gagged and confined to a chair on the far end of the room.

CLOSE ON - Behind Sheryl's back. Her bloody hands, sans one finger, tremble softly. Her remaining digits start to LOOSEN her restraints.

103 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2 - DAY** 103

Mike hangs, once again. Clyde stands before him, Ida enters. She wheels the bar-b-q in the room.

IN THE PIT - It's filled with hot, smoking coals. Also, THREE IRON BRANDS rest buried in the coals. All glow a FIERY ORANGE.

CLYDE
I think we have to have another... man to man discussion, here, Michael.

But unlike previous moments, Mike is not begging or pleading. He holds a calm demeanor.

CLYDE
Seems as though, time is now factoring into our situation.

104 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 104

Sheryl continues working the ropes, as... THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN. Sheryl freezes, stops working the ropes.

Deacon enters, sickle in hand. He's calm and determined. He stares at Sheryl. Sinister thoughts in mind.

QUICK CUTS DEACON'S POV: Sheryl's mouth/ chest/ legs.

Deacon approaches Sheryl, kneels down in front of her. He LAYS THE SICKLE ON THE FLOOR. Sheryl eyes the weapon.

Deacon takes something from his pocket, lifts his arms up towards Sheryl's head.

She winces, expecting the worst.

Deacon slides Sheryl's locket around her neck. The chain repaired. Deacon beams with pride.

Deacon shifts her skirt exposing more skin and places his hands on Sheryl's bare thighs. She twitches instinctively causing Deacon to squeeze her thighs TIGHTER.

Sheryl winces in pain, stops her struggle. Locks EYES with Deacon. Suddenly, an aura of CALM falls over her.

BEHIND SHERYL'S BACK... She resumes untying the knots.

Deacon savors every moment of Sheryl. Her smell, form. He glides his hands up her body, past her stomach and onto her breasts. He GROPES them, in his own heaven.

CLOSE ON - The knot loosens... almost there.

105 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2 - DAY** 105

Ida ROTATES the brands in the bar-b-q, doing her best subtle intimidation.

CLYDE
We're not violent people, Michael. It pains us to pain you.

MIKE
I don't know... Seems as though Deacon and yourselves get a real kick out of it.

CLYDE
Now see, this is what I am talking about. It's your attitude. It's the disobedience, the cussing...Sooner we get what we want, then no further harm has to fall upon you and your wife.

MIKE
Way I see it, you need us alive. You need us, period. And now that Park Services and State Police are looking for us, you're starting to panic,
(MORE)

MIKE (cont'd)
knowing your whole plan's crumbling down before your eyes.
(To Ida STRONG)
So you can stop spinning those fucking irons thinking you're scaring me, cause you're not.
(Beat; to both of them)
You're a couple of demented, sick, pathetic freaks.

Ida grabs a brand, JABS IT ONTO MIKE'S CHEST.

MIKE SCREAMS. THE BRAND BURNS INTO HIS FLESH. HIS EYES BULGE. HE VOMITS.

106 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - IDA'S CABIN** 106

Deacon TEARS open Sheryl's blouse, exposing her bra and more cleavage. He slides his hands over her breasts... he's in heaven. Sheryl doesn't resist because...

CLOSE ON - The knot's undone. Her hands are free.

Deacon looks into Sheryl's eyes. He senses something different. *Does he know?*

Deacon pulls himself closer to Sheryl. Their faces only inches apart. He PULLS her gag out of her mouth, lets it dangle around her neck. Sheryl swallows nervously. Resists the urge to scream. She's frozen. Then... Deacon leans in... KISSES SHERYL.

Knowing it's now or never, Sheryl KNEES DEACON IN THE BALLS. He falls over in agony.

Deacon looks up at her, when... SMACK! She KICKS him right in the face. Sheryl springs from the chair, grabs the sickle, turns and...

CRACK! Deacon, already back on his feet, PUNCHES Sheryl hard across the jaw. She hits the wall, then falls to the floor, drops the sickle.

ANGLE ON - A SMALL POCKET KNIFE falls off a shelf in the room onto the floor.

Deacon grabs the sickle, then lifts her up BY HER HAIR and drags her across the room.

He throws her face/stomach down on the table top, flips her dress up onto her back. He slides the sickle between her ass and underwear and... CUTS HER PANTIES OFF IN ONE QUICK MOTION, SPREADS HER LEGS APART.

Sheryl, still stunned from the punch, only now starts to realize what is happening to her.

SHERYL
(Weak, soft)
No.

She tries to wiggle off table or close her legs, but Deacon's too strong. He grabs the back of her head, SLAMS it against the table, pinning it in place. With the other hand, HE SLIDES OFF HIS PANTS.

SHERYL
(Stronger)
No!

107 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2 - IDA'S CABIN** 107

Mike, his chest scarred, bloody, from the fresh wound, dangles helplessly. Vomit splashed down his body.

Clyde and Ida look to one another...

CLYDE
What was that?

108 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - DAY** 108

Deacon slaps his left hand over her mouth, climbs on top of Sheryl using his weight to keep her in place. Deacon positions himself for penetration, when...

Sheryl SCREAMS, but Deacon's hand muffles the cries.

With every ounce of strength left inside her, SHERYL BITES DOWN ON DEACON'S HAND. He SCREAMS, falling off of her.

CLOSE ON DEACON'S HAND - blood oozes, a large piece looks ripped out.

Sheryl SPITS the small chunk of his hand out of her mouth.

Deacon grabs the SICKLE/AXE, starts towards Sheryl...

At the top of her lungs, SHERYL LETS LOOSE A BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM! And...

Ida bursts in the room...

IDA
Deacon! Stop right there!

Deacon turns to Ida, stops his attack on Sheryl.

IDA
Out! Get out!

Deacon slinks away. Sheryl curls up in a ball, emotions consume her. She breaks down.

109 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - SUNSET** 109

The Sun sinks on the horizon...

110 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 110

Sheryl's tied, once again, to the table. Mike tied to a chair, which is dragged into the room by Clyde.

Sheryl sees Mike's burned chest.

CLYDE
This is getting out of hand, y'all. Nobody wanted what just almost happened to Sheryl to happen. But, you keep dragging this thing out... things are gonna... happen.

IDA
I sent Deacon away for a bit. He knows he done wrong. You say right now that you are ready to perform your marital duties, then I'll keep him away.

MIKE
Have you ever thought that God doesn't want you to have a child? That's why he fucking kills them before they're born. Because you're fucking insane monsters that don't deserve a child.

Ida SLAPS Mike.

IDA
You take that back!

MIKE
No.

IDA
Take it back.

Ida digs her hand into Mike's bear trap wound, squeezes. But Mike doesn't scream or squirm. He endures the pain.

MIKE
Go ahead and torture me. There's absolutely no way I would ever give a child of mine to you.

IDA
How very brave. Fine. I won't torture you.
(Looks to Sheryl)
I'll torture her. I can bring back Deacon. Let him have her. Plenty of other holes he can go into where a baby can't be made.

Ida grabs a nearby knife, walks up to Sheryl.

IDA
Or maybe we can just start dicing. All we need is a healthy heart, brain and uterus. She don't need the rest of her fingers, or toes... or her nose, ears. I could carve out her eye right now.

Ida places the knife on top of Sheryl's cheek, just below the eye. The tip just centimeters away from the eyeball.

MIKE
No!

Ida takes the knife away, gets in Mike's face...

IDA
Then you will give me my baby. My child, born in wedlock, saved from its sinner parents and raised to fear God and give him praise.

Sheryl starts LAUGHING. Inappropriate, but nonetheless, She's cracking up. *Has she finally cracked?*

SHERYL
That's why you married us? So we could conceive our child in wedlock? The fucking joke's on you... I'm already pregnant. Eight weeks yesterday.

Clyde and Ida stare disbelievingly at Sheryl.

IDA
You're lying.

Mike stares in shock at Sheryl.

In that look, Ida knows Sheryl's telling the truth.

SHERYL
I was trying to find the right time to tell you.

TEARS fill both their eyes.

IDA
No, no, no, no! This can't be. NO!

Clyde grabs hold of Ida, tries to calm her down. When...

OFF SCREEN: A GLASS BREAKS. It came from upstairs.

IDA AND CLYDE SPRING INTO ACTION. They exit the room, BOLT THE DOOR LOCKED.

MIKE'S POV - THE POCKET KNIFE still on the floor.

111 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 111

Brody and Lonnie stand on the porch. Brody holds a shotgun, Lonnie a rifle.

Brody reaches inside the broken window, unlocks it.

LONNIE
We shouldn't just go in. Ain't right.

Brody slides open the window.

BRODY
I'm going in. You don't want to, then don't. Check round back or something.

Brody climbs inside. Lonnie heads around the back.

112 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 112

Mike ROCKS his chair back and forth, building momentum... Finally, the CHAIR tips over.

He uses his feet to push himself along. Heading for THE POCKETKNIFE.

113 **INT. MAIN ROOM - IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 113

Brody moves through cabin, shotgun ready. All's calm, quiet.

114 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 114

Lonnie walks in the back yard... Nothing here, except.

ON THE GROUND - Lonnie steps on patch of ground that's different than the rest.

Lonnie peers curiously at the ground. *What's he found?*

115 **INT. SEWING ROOM, IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 115

Brody enters... the Trap Door in the floor is open. He peers inside, then proceeds down.

116 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 116

Lonnie bends down, finds a handle. Lifts, REVEAL, A HIDDEN TRAP DOOR ENTRANCE. Lonnie peers inside...

LONNIE'S POV - A dark staircase leads down. At the bottom, a wooden door, which is closed.

LONNIE
Hello?

117 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 117

Mike hears this...

MIKE
Help! Down here!

118 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 118

Lonnie takes a step down, when...

CLYDE APPEARS, BURIES AN AX INTO LONNIE'S HEAD. LONNIE FALLS INTO THE HOLE AND DOWN THE STAIRS!

His body crashes through the closed wooden door, into the hallway.

119 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1** 119

MIKE'S POV - UNDER THE GAP BETWEEN THE FLOOR AND DOOR, Lonnie's body lands. Eyes stare at Mike.

120 **INT. CHAPEL** 120

Brody stares at the FETUS JARS, "WHAT THE FUCK?"

THE IRON DOOR SWINGS OPEN... IDA, SHOTGUN IN HAND, BLASTS BRODY IN THE CHEST. BLOOD FLIES ACROSS THE WALLS.

121 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 121

The MOON hides behind some dark clouds.

122 **EXT. WOODS BEHIND IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 122

A giant pile of dirt. The dead body of Brody sits inside the makeshift grave. Ida pushes Lonnie's carcass in next.

Clyde watches Ida, concern in his eyes.

CLYDE
Ida... you know what we have to do?

IDA
(Already anticipating)
No. I can give her an abortion. Get rid of the bastard child, make them conceive one in wedlock. And then we are right as rain.

CLYDE
Abortion? No. That we won't do.

IDA
It'll work. Ain't no sin to abort a demon.

CLYDE
Ida, writings on the wall here. Michael's right. With a reward on the table, do you think Brody and Lonnie will be the only two coming? Gonna have lots people looking for these two.
(Beat)
We're gonna have to make it so no one can ever find them.

IDA
No.

Ida and Clyde. A sadness covers their faces, especially Ida.

CLYDE
We'll find another couple, Ida.

IDA
No. You promised me, Clyde, this time was the one.

CLYDE
It's too dangerous. We'll find another couple. A better one.

IDA
(Long beat)
It's not fair.

Clyde nods. They hug.

A CRACKLE OF LIGHTNING followed by a ROLL OF THUNDER.

CLYDE
I'll do what needs to be done. You finish up here... And watch your time, rain's coming.

Clyde hands her the shovel. Ida nods, tosses a pile of dirt into the grave.

123 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT - NIGHT** 123

Clyde walks down the hall, loads Ida's shotgun with a couple fresh shells.

He unlocks, then pushes open the door to Torture Room #1.

124 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 124

Mike sits in the chair, exactly where he and Ida left him. Mike's head sags, he appears to be sleeping.

Sheryl lies on the table, out cold.

Clyde levels the shotgun to Mike's head. But something odd catches Clyde's attention...

ON THE FLOOR - Behind Mike's chair, some rope shavings, pieces.

CLYDE
What the...?

Mike SPRINGS TO LIFE, GRABS CLYDE PULLS HIM IN.

As Clyde falls into Mike's body. The SHOTGUN FIRES HARMLESSLY INTO THE GROUND.

Mike swings his hand around, PLUNGES the pocket knife into Clyde's neck!

Clyde SCREAMS. The knife embedded in his neck. He throws his hands to it, stumbles backwards and falls.

Clyde tries to speak, but it comes out GURGLING and BLOODY.

MIKE
Believe me, I understand your extreme situation, but... Punishment's going to have to be handed down.

Mike aims the shotgun at Clyde and... BOOM! The blast takes half of Clyde's head and neck apart. Mike stares at Clyde's body.

MIKE
One down.

125 **EXT. WOODS BEHIND IDA'S CABIN- NIGHT** 125

THE RAIN STARTS...

Ida stops, she heard the two shots. The deed done. She grabs her shovel, walks back towards the cabin.

125A **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 125A

ANGLE ON - The open shotgun as Mike takes out the two empty shells.

Mike, now next to Clyde, feels Clyde's pockets for more shells, but there are none.

MIKE
Fuck.

SHERYL
What is it?

MIKE
No more ammo.

Mike glances around the room, then spies... THE KNIFE he stabbed CLYDE with. He picks it up off the floor.

OFF SCREEN: In the distance, the IRON DOOR CREAKS OPEN.

OFF SHERYL AND MIKE'S LOOK, WE...

CUT TO:

126 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT - NIGHT** 126

Ida approaches the room, pushes open the door.

127 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #1 - NIGHT** 127

IDA'S POV - The room is empty. Except for...

ANGLE ON - Clyde's dead body.

IDA
NO!

Ida drops by his side, cradles his body. The love of her life is gone. Before she know what's happening, she turns...

MIKE, knife in hand, EXPLODES FROM TORTURE ROOM #2, RUNS STRAIGHT FOR IDA, but...

Ida SWINGS THE SHOVEL, KNOCKS MIKE'S LEGS OUT FROM UNDER HIM. He trips and falls to the floor.

Ida gets up, STOMPS DOWN ON MIKE'S HAND. The knife drops.

FROM THE HALLWAY... Sheryl looks out, watches as...

BACK IN THE ROOM... Ida grabs the knife, PLUNGES it deep into Mike's calf.

IDA
In for a penny, in for a pound. I can't save your soul now, Michael. I tried. I gave you a way to cleanse yourself of all your sins and deliver you to heaven... and how do you repay me?

Ida takes the knife, DAGGERS IT INTO MIKE'S THIGH.

IDA
BY KILLING MY CLYDE?!?

SHERYL--

Spots the shovel on the floor, grabs it...

IDA
There is no soul blacker than yours. And now, by the grace of God, I must deliver you to Satan myself.

Ida retracts the blade, pulls herself on top of Mike. Ready to stab again, when...

SHERYL SLAMS THE SHOVEL OVER IDA'S HEAD.

ANGLE ON - THE SHOVEL BLADE sprayed with blood.

Ida falls over. Sheryl and Mike stare at her lifeless body.

Sheryl steps over Ida's legs. She takes a big step, clears Ida's upper body...and stumbles.

Sheryl goes to Mike, wraps his arm around her, lifts him up. But just as his foot touches the ground... A SURGE OF PAIN CRIPPLES HIM. Mike falls back to the ground.

MIKE
I can't make it.

SHERYL
I'm not leaving you.

MIKE
(Thinks)
Clyde's walkie-talkie. It's probably upstairs. Find it. Call the Ranger base.
(Remembers)
My gun. See if you can find our stuff. My gun's in my backpack, side pocket.

SHERYL
What good's the gun? You tossed away the bullets.

Mike turns away. Guilt etched on his face.

MIKE
There's another box of ammo.

SHERYL
Mike...!?!

MIKE
Let's get out of this alive first, then you can bitch me out, okay?

Sheryl concedes. She goes to the ladder, stops... turns.

Mike looks at her. They stare at one another.

MIKE
It's okay, baby. Go.

Sheryl turns, ascends the ladder.

128 **INT. MAIN ROOM - IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 128

Sheryl exits the sewing room, enters...

129 **INT. CLYDE AND IDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT** 129

Sheryl searches the bedroom for the walkie-talkie.

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING, illuminates... In the window, Deacon appears.

Sheryl doesn't see Deacon. She FINDS the walkie-talkie...

SHERYL
(Pushes button)
Hello? Come in, please. We need help. Is anyone there?

INTERCUT WITH:

130 **I/E RANGER BASE STATION - NIGHT** 130

RAIN beats against the windows, pounds the roof. Evelyn, with poncho, stands outside, just locking the door, when...

SHERYL (V.O.)
Please, someone? Is anyone there that can help?

SHERYL... Lowers the walkie, waits for an answer.

EVELYN... stops. She heard something, but not sure exactly what. She re-enters, heads over to the CB. Just as she picks up the CB Mic...

DEACON, dripping wet, appears in doorway, lunges for Sheryl.

Sheryl screams, drops walk-talkie, as Deacon tackles her onto the bed. The WALKIE-TALKIE BREAKS into pieces.

EVELYN... Pushes the “talk button” on the CB...

EVELYN
This is Ranger Base, Go again?

SHERYL AND DEACON... The headboard SLAMS against the wall, causing a Crucifix to dislodge off a nail and fall onto the pillow by Sheryl’s head.

131 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA’S CABIN BASEMENT** 131

Mike hears Sheryl scream, realizes it must be Deacon. He lifts himself up using the wall as balance.

132 **INT. CLYDE AND IDA’S BEDROOM** 132

Deacon strangles Sheryl with one hand.

Sheryl’s eyes BULGE out of her head, her face BEET RED.

Deacon raises the sickle/axe into the air with the other.

Sheryl’s hand finds the Crucifix and JABS IT INTO DEACON’S JAW. Deacon grabs for the cross, lets go of Sheryl rolls off her, the bed and collapses to the floor.

Sheryl coughs, struggles for some air. She climbs off the bed, runs out of the room.

133 **INT. TORTURE ROOM #2** 133

Mike enters, scours for a weapon. Finds a MACHETE.

134 **INT. CLYDE AND IDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT** 134

Deacon YANKS the Crucifix from his jaw. BLOOD SQUIRTS, POURS from the wound.

135 **INT. SEWING ROOM, CABIN - NIGHT** 135

Sheryl runs in, screams down the trap door hole...

SHERYL
Mike!

136 **INT. HALLWAY/ TORTURE ROOM - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 136

Mike exits room, passes Ida's lifeless body. Trudges down the hall. Each step painful.

137 **INT. SEWING ROOM, CABIN - NIGHT** 137

Deacon enters. One hand covers his wound, the other holds the sickle/axe.

Sheryl grabs a candlestick, uses it to defend herself.

Deacon swipes at her, but misses.

Sheryl cracks him across jaw with candlestick... he falls, but GRABS ONTO SHERYL...

THEY BOTH FALL UNCONTROLLABLY DOWN THE TRAP DOOR STEPS, into...

138 **INT. CHAPEL** 138

Sheryl and Deacon TUMBLE, CRASH into shelf wall with the fetus jars. They wobble, shake, then...

THE ENTIRE SHELF WALL CRASHES ON TOP OF SHERYL AND DEACON.

The FETUS JARS BREAK, SPILL OUT EVERYWHERE.

The shelf wall BLOCKS the Iron Door from opening.

139 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 139

Mike looks up, hears the commotion. It only quickens his pace.

MIKE
Sheryl!

A path of blood left in Mike's wake.

140 **INT. CHAPEL** 140

Sheryl shakes the cobwebs free, opens her eyes, moves her head slightly, just as...

SLAM. THE SICKLE BLADE SLAMS INTO THE WOODEN FLOOR AN INCH AWAY FROM SHERYL'S HEAD.

Sheryl scrambles to her feet, when...

SQUISH. HER FOOT STEPS DOWN ON TOP OF THE SMALLEST FETUS. PUSS AND MUCUS OOZE OUT.

Deacon tries to push the shelf off him. It's heavy. It moves a little.

Sheryl limps up the trap door steps.

141 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 141

Mike pushes up against the Iron Door, but it doesn't move. The shelf wall blocks it.

142 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 142

Sheryl races from the cabin. RAIN POURING DOWN ON HER. She spies...

ANGLE ON - Moonshine jar, a lighter. The ones Ida used earlier.

143 **INT. CHAPEL** 143

Deacon pushes the shelves again, this time success. He gets to his feet, grabs his weapon.

144 **INT. HALLWAY - IDA'S CABIN BASEMENT** 144

Mike, with every ounce of strength left, PUSHES at the iron door. It budges, just a little. He PUSHES again and, finally, THE DOOR OPENS! Mike scrambles into the Chapel.

145 **EXT. IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 145

Deacon exits the cabin, steps off the porch. He peers into the rain and the darkness of the woods surrounding the cabin. No Sheryl anywhere.

SHERYL (O.S.)
Hey!

Deacon turns, looks up...

ON THE PORCH ROOF...

Sheryl, a fresh tear in her dress, holds the SILVER LIGHTER in one hand, the moonshine jar in the other. The Moonshine jar has a torn length of her dress sticking out, a homemade Molotov Cocktail. She glares down at Deacon, lights the cocktail...

SHERYL
Burn in hell you sonofabitch!

She drops it...

THE COCKTAIL HITS. THE FLAMES CONSUME DEACON, SPREAD QUICKLY OVER HIS ENTIRE BODY.

Deacon flails wildly, trying to put out the flames, stumbles forward, runs off towards the forest. He trips and falls just as he enters.

SHERYL... the rain pouring down, stares at...

ANGLE ON - DEACON'S BURNING CORPSE lays in the thick brush.

146 **OMIT** 146

147 **OMIT** 147

148 **INT. MAIN ROOM - IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 148

Sheryl enters... Mike limps to her. He drops the machete, collapses in her arms. They hug tightly.

149 **INT. CHAPEL** 149

ANGLE ON - A BLOODY HAND grabs a POKER from the fireplace.

150 **INT. MAIN ROOM - IDA'S CABIN - NIGHT** 150

Mike looks, across the room...

IN THE MIRROR'S REFLECTION - IDA, THE BLOODY MESS THAT SHE IS, STEPS FROM THE SHADOWS, AN IRON FIRE POKER in her hands.

Mike pushes Sheryl to the couch, safely away just as... IDA STABS MIKE IN THE STOMACH WITH THE POKER.

SHERYL SCREAMS. SHE RUNS TOWARDS IDA, SICKLE/AXE IN TOW... SHE SWINGS THE BLADE... IT SLICES THROUGH THE AIR, AND...

ANGLE ON - IDA'S HEAD, SEVERED AT THE NECK, HITS THE FLOOR, ROLLS TO A STOP.

Sheryl turns away from Ida, runs to Mike's side.

Mike's a bloody mess, his life slips from him by the second.

Sheryl TEARS Mike's shirt, BLOOD POURS from his stomach. She finds the wound, but has nothing to stop the blood.

SHERYL
You did it, baby. You saved me. You said you would and you did. Stay with me, Mike. Stay with me.

MIKE
(Barely audible)
Love you.

SHERYL
Well, if you love me... Fight. Please baby, fight.

She looks around wildly, spying... A wardrobe by the kitchen.

SHERYL
I'll be back in a second, Mike.

Sheryl jumps up, races for the wardrobe.

INSIDE THE WARDROBE--

On a shelf are some towels, linens, etc.

Sheryl grabs the towels, but as she does. She sees, on the floor of the wardrobe... HER BACKPACK.

Sheryl quickly rummages through her backpack. She finds... her CELLPHONE. The fliers with the emergency contact info.

JUMP CUT TO:

Sheryl drops down by Mike's side. She leans in, listens for breath sounds, feels for his pulse, finds one. Very weak, but it's there.

SHERYL
Don't you even fucking think about leaving me alone.

She PRESSES THE TOWEL against his stomach wound, all the while the phone's pressed between her ear and shoulder.

The “NO SIGNAL” TONE chimes in her ear.

SHERYL
Shit.
(To Mike)
Come on, baby. Fight.

Sheryl re-dials, only to get another NO SIGNAL TONE.

SHERYL
Oh please God.

Sheryl raises the phone into the air.

ON THE SCREEN - ONE SINGLE BAR POPS ON.

Sheryl hits RE-DIAL.

ON THE SCREEN - DIALING... DIALING... DIALING... CONNECTED.

DISSOLVE TO:

150A **OMIT** 150A

150B **OMIT** 150B

151 **EXT. IDA’S CABIN - NIGHT** 151

The RAIN has STOPPED. A couple of RANGERS along with a PARAMEDIC UNIT surround the scene.

SHERYL... sits, completely still, a PARAMEDIC works on her cuts and hand. She watches as...

THE OTHER PARAMEDICS load a gurney into the back of the Ambulance. A sheet covers the body. <u>Mike’s body</u>. Once inside, the Ambulance’s doors close.

Sheryl watches the Ambulance pull away. She places her hand on her stomach. *It’s just the two of them now*.

EVELYN... steps from the midst of the activity, up to Sheryl. She leads her away from the ambulance, towards the Ranger truck.

EVELYN
Called your folks. There gunna meet us at the hospital. Be a while since they’re coming in from D.C.

The words go straight through Sheryl. No reaction.

EVELYN
Sorry, but I just have to ask... You told the Sheriff there was someone in on this whole thing with Clyde and Ida. Big fella, scars all over him?
(No response)
Mame?

Sheryl's eyes meet Evelyn's. She nods about to continue on, until she notices Evelyn's demeanor.

SHERYL
Why? What is it?

EVELYN
(Changing topics)
You've had an exhausting night, why don't you...

SHERYL
(Hard, cold)
What is it?

EVELYN
We didn't find anybody like that in the yard or the house.

SHERYL
(Concern growing)
No. It's not possible.

She turns, looks around, but spies nothing...

EVELYN
Calm down. It's gunna be alright...

SHERYL
Fuck you it's gonna be alright.

Sheryl turns to the woods, holds her look. As if she knows...

152 **EXT. WOODS NEAR THE CABIN - NIGHT** 152

In the distance... past the trees, deep into the woods.

COME TO A REST OVER THE SHOULDER OF DEACON. Very much alive. He stares at the cabin for a beat, then CROSSES out of frame.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE OUT.

THE END